




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MAIWAR

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ADJOURNMENT

Climate Change

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (9.25 pm): It has been heartbreaking to see the scale of destruction in the Mid North Coast of New South Wales over the past few weeks with around 10,000 homes and businesses damaged or destroyed in major flooding. Many of those affected were uninsured after previous floods left them uninsurable. This will no doubt be a really triggering scene for countless people in my electorate and across Queensland who have experienced flooding in recent times. Queensland is Australia's most disaster-prone state. Killer heatwaves, deadly bushfires, destructive cyclones, storms and floods are just part of the landscape, but it is only going to get worse and the flow-on effects will be devastating—increased disease, crop failure, water scarcity and economic and social instability. We are long past describing any of this kind of talk as alarmist. This is the future that we as decision-makers in this state and this country are lining up for our kids and our grandkids and their kids and their grandkids, yet both major parties have got their foot on the gas—quite literally—driving as fast as possible towards devastating climate collapse.

It took the majority federal Labor government less than a month post election to approve a 45-year expansion to the North West Shelf gas project off the coast of Western Australia. That is even quicker than the federal LNP promised to approve the same project if elected. The people of Australia did not decisively vote against the LNP just to watch federal Labor implement policies at the same breathtaking speed. The project will contribute more emissions over its lifetime than all of Australia's coal plants together, and this approval means it will operate out to 2070. That is 20 years beyond—a whole 20 years beyond—Australia's net zero commitment, and what was the Prime Minister's response to that when asked? He said, 'It's net zero, not zero.' How glib! Talk about gas lobby gaslighting from the PM. In that same week the Queensland LNP opened up nine new areas for gas exploration covering 16,000 square kilometres, threatening not just the stability of the climate but also the vitality of the groundwater resources that their regional and rural constituents rely on.

After years of fighting for climate action, I am still left baffled by how both major parties can continue to approve new coal and gas and with a straight face hide behind semantics and artificial emissions accounting. It cannot be for the tax benefits to constituents considering that gas companies do not pay any and it cannot be for supplying the domestic market and keeping energy prices down considering that the vast majority of domestic gas production is exported. It is for the hundreds of thousands of dollars that companies like Woodside donate to Labor and the LNP. No amount of money is comparable to the 50,000 years of cultural history in the Murujuga rock art and it is a pittance compared to the billions of dollars of damages we can expect from the climate disasters coming.

(Time expired)