




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR TRAEGER

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ADJOURNMENT

CopperString; Gas Reserve Policy

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (9.24 pm): I always get pretty upset when I come down here and we talk in this parliament about the Olympics and Cross River Rail. I represent an area that has its back against the wall at the moment. We know that Queensland is an economic stronghold and that we are all supposed to be part of one state, so when we are in trouble we expect people to help.

CopperString is the biggest transmission line to ever be built in Australia and Powerlink are dragging the chain. They need to go. I found out that they have 1,600 people on their books and that they have a building at Virginia. One would think that if they have 1,600 people on their books then at least half of them must be in Townsville, as the biggest transmission line ever to be built in Australia is being built there. Surely, the bulk of the 1,600 are up there. I looked it up and 30 of them are in Gladstone and Townsville. I looked at what the top six people are paid. They are all paid over \$450,000 and the CEO is on \$1 million.

Their building at Virginia is a big playhouse and half of them are working at home. They are having a good time clipping the ticket on CopperString. They are all saying, 'We are working on CopperString.' No, they are not. They are not doing a thing. In two years they have done nothing. They were given a fully approved project with a contract ready to be signed with the contractor—CPB. Here they are two years later saying that they were given a concept. That is not true. They were given something. Now they are trying to undermine the whole project.

Everyone else in my area, the mines included, is saying 'What do we do? There does not seem to be a future here.' There is a role for the government to play here. They should put a bomb under them and move 500 of their staff to Townsville. They do not need to be in Brisbane working as consultants on the project. They need to be pulled into gear.

Average industry standards say that the project should cost no more than \$4 billion. Let's make it \$5 billion. It should not be \$9 billion. They are taking us for a ride and trying to disable the project by making it cost too much. They need to be pulled into line or we need to get rid of them because they are going to pull the whole project down and pull the North West Minerals Province down with it.

Little Eva mines needs to be built. The copper smelter has to remain open. The mine does not need to close down. There needs to be a gas reserve policy for Incitec Pivot. Their fertiliser plant is of strategic value for not only the state but also the nation. Its back is against the wall because we have never had a gas reserve policy in this place.

Qatar exports less gas than us. It gets \$30 billion a year in royalties. We struggle to get \$2 billion in royalties and we export more gas. Our gas price went from \$3 or \$4 a gigajoule. They are skiting about \$15 a gigajoule. We sold it all overseas.

Good on Peter Dutton for calling for a gas reserve. That is exactly what we need. We need a real gas reserve policy. We need it adopted in Queensland. It will save Incitec Pivot. It would have saved its Gibson Island works in Brisbane if people cared about that. It is the only answer for the future of Incitec Pivot. We need a gas reserve policy as well.