




Speech By
Hon. Amanda Stoker

MEMBER FOR OODGEROO

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ADJOURNMENT

Oodgeroo Electorate, Cost-of-Living Relief

 **Hon. AJ STOKER** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (9.09 pm): Peter from Cleveland, now in his late 70s, has worked hard all his life. He has saved and paid his way, even in retirement. Despite doing the right thing for so long, he now reaches his retirement years shocked to find that the cost of living has risen so much that his standard of living will be nothing like what he planned, saved and prepared for. Pensioners experience the same thing and so do working people, especially when wages are stagnant. Inflation has been too high for too long and it is eating away at people's wealth.

While the federal Treasurer was eager to try to point the finger at Iran for the recent increase in interest rates, the Reserve Bank governor belled the cat pretty darned quickly. She pointed out that the inflation relevant to the bank's assessment was much too high well before the present volatility in the Middle East emerged. CPI went up to 3.8 per cent just this January and is likely to rise again. That means there is worse to come on both inflation and interest rates as fuel price inflation is factored into future rises. Now that we are in a fuel crisis, we are paying spectacularly high prices for the federal government's lack of spending discipline in the years leading up to it.

Labor in Canberra are likewise short-changing Queensland in the allocation of GST revenue, punishing this state for its willingness to advance the mining industry, which funds so much of our public infrastructure, hospitals, schools and more. The methodology adopted by the federal government for the allocation of the GST quite literally rewards a state such as Victoria for shutting down its mining industry with the fruits of Queenslanders' labour. You could not make this stuff up. None of it is good news, especially given the slow response from the Prime Minister on fuel supply despite the efforts of the Queensland Treasurer and Premier to prompt swift national action and an ACCC effort to keep an eye on price gouging early in the interests of our fishers, farmers, families, local businesses and households alike.

However, there are glimmers of hope for Redlanders. As a result of this government's efforts to restore stability and sense to this sector, the default market offer for electricity has reduced by 10.1 per cent for Queensland householders and nearly 13 per cent for small businesses. It went up by 19.9 per cent in Labor's last year. Similarly, our work is making our communities safer and driving down insurance premiums. Permanent 50-cent fares are making transport more affordable, even in this difficult fuel-cost environment. We locked that in; those opposite had no way to. Our hospital, which struggled for so long, is getting much needed investments and we are backing in affordable social activities for seniors at U3A Redlands. There is more to do but we are on the job.