

Speech By

Robbie Katter

MEMBER FOR TRAEGER

Record of Proceedings, 24 June 2026

MOTION

Energy

Mr KATTER (Traeger—KAP) (5.30 pm): I move—

That this House:

1. notes the vast resources of uranium in Queensland;
2. notes that world demand for uranium is forecast to triple by 2040;
3. calls on the government to end the policy of no mining or exporting of uranium in Queensland, opening an economic windfall for Queensland and potential future nuclear energy industry;
4. notes the rapid expansion of wind energy developments across Queensland and the absence of legislated requirements to guarantee the full rehabilitation, decommissioning and restoration of affected land at the end of a project's operational life; and
5. calls on the government to introduce legislation establishing a rigorous approval, financial assurance, rehabilitation, and decommissioning framework for wind energy developments, including enforceable obligations to remove infrastructure, rehabilitate sites and restore land to an agreed condition upon project closure.

I begin tonight by talking about the first part of the motion that revolves around the uranium mining industry and the potential for nuclear to be built off the back of that. Then the motion talks about having things in place for wind farms and proper provisions being made for the decommissioning of wind farms.

Firstly, I would like to talk about uranium mining. Uranium is a $15 billion to $19 billion industry that is untapped at the moment—and that is the uranium that we know about in Australia. A great deal of that is in Queensland. Queensland is the only state In Australia with known uranium reserves that does not allow uranium mining. You can do it in Western Australia and you can do it in South Australia at Olympic Dam, but you are not allowed to do it in Queensland. I am yet to hear the rational arguments against uranium mining in Queensland, other than not wanting to mine uranium in Queensland because of the antiquated 'No Nukes' campaign of 30 years ago. That seems to have disappeared, so here we are.

The World Nuclear Association now forecasts a tripling of demand for uranium by 2040. It is an industry that will go ahead. There will be further demand for it. The question is: do we want to participate in it like the rest of the world and like other states in Australia or do we deny the residents and taxpayers of Queensland the ability to benefit from an industry that is there? If we do not, it is really important that we explain the reasons we would deny them that opportunity. That is pretty much the reason we are in this parliament—that is, to air these issues, to see where we all stand and to proper articulate the reasons we would deny people this opportunity.

Data centres are becoming a big thing around the world. It is a fast-growing, emerging industry that is power hungry. It needs high energy density. That has led to the trend globally of asking: what will energy source can provide high base load with a lot of torque and a lot of energy density? That has led everyone to uranium and nuclear power. India has recently been in the media saying that they are looking to Australia to access the uranium to power their data centres. President Modi is visiting

Australia in July to seek more Australian uranium so there is a big opportunity for Queensland to engage on that basis. In 2023, 22 world leaders, led by the French leader, said that they would triple nuclear generation by 2050. Twenty-two world leaders think it is a good idea but we do not.

The New South Wales upper house passed a bill May 2026 to lift their uranium mining ban in. That is very interesting because it is the first time in a long time that any such legislation has been passed in Australian parliaments. This gives further evidence of the trend towards nuclear and, by default, uranium mining. Canada announced just yesterday that it will build 10 more reactors. There is further evidence of a growing global demand for the products that we can produce.

In the Mount Isa region we have 80,000 tonnes of contained uranium metal. There are roughly 51,000 tonnes at Valhalla—about 40 kilometres from my house in Mount Isa—and about 20,000 tonnes at Westmoreland, which is a further away up in the gulf. There has been no uranium mining in Queensland since 1982. In 2012 there was—

Mr Stevens: Mary Kathleen.

Mr KATTER: I will take that interjection. Mary Kathleen is right near my home. Thank you, member. In 2012, there was support from the LNP. I am the only MP on the record in this House mentioning it before that. Hats off and full credit to the LNP back in 2012 that they moved to make it lawful to mine uranium but there were still regulations around transport that needed to be made. They were—you might say sat on—worked on for three years and they never came into effect. That change really never had any material effect. It was then wound back by Labor in 2015.

(Time expired)