



David Littleproud MP

Federal Member for Maranoa

Surat Basin News contribution

October 17, 2016

Queensland's Renewable Energy Target unrealistic

IN QUEENSLAND, we've plenty of access to sunshine so I think it makes sense the largest federal electorate in the state is looking into renewable energy but not at the cost of higher power prices, which would hardest hit our most vulnerable.

During the last sittings, I spoke in Federal Parliament to outline how an innovative Maranoa – which spans more than 42% of Queensland – is capturing sunshine, but warned the Queensland Government is compromising energy security and prices by setting unrealistic renewable energy targets.

Queensland Labor has put-forward an unrealistic 50% renewable energy target by 2025, which could lead us down a path like South Australia's compromised energy security – where we saw a total state-wide blackout at the start of this month.

I'm critical because the likely outcome of this unrealistic target is consumers – and particularly those who can least afford it – will be hit by sky-high energy prices in Queensland and a less secure electricity supply.

Not only are farm bills exceedingly high for producers and small businesses, struggling to recover from drought, but I'm also worried about the repercussions for our pensioners and families.

The Coalition Government is on track to meet and beat the Renewable Energy Target of 23.5% by 2020. This target was set with bipartisan support from the Labor Opposition last year and we're achieving this through sustainable and responsibly modelled measures.

The Australian Renewable Energy Agency recently announced large-scale solar funding for two exciting projects in my electorate which are due to start construction from as early as December.

The Federal Government invested \$20 million in the Darling Downs Solar Farm, to be constructed by Origin Energy, that will not only generate 110 megawatts of solar energy but also deliver 550 new jobs in the Dalby region.

We've also invested \$1.3 million in the Longreach Solar Farm which will generate 15 megawatts of power and provide about 75 new jobs in Longreach – a community significantly impacted by drought.

Further to these projects, we currently have a large-scale solar farm underway on 90 hectares in Barcaldine where the energy generated will provide power to more than 5300 homes.

I believe the role of any government is to responsibly implement international obligations, in a balanced way, to transition the energy economy to lower emissions but it must work within budgetary constraints to ensure efficient, responsible and reliable energy for all Australians.

–ENDS–

Media Contact:

Eloise Handley

M: 0411 095 860

E: eloise.handley@aph.gov.au
