



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Broadband

SPEECH

Monday, 22 February 2016

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Questioner
Speaker Thistlethwaite, Matt, MP

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Mr THISTLETHWAITE (Kingsford Smith) (11:30): I wish to update the parliament regarding the rollout of the National Broadband Network in our community of Kingsford Smith, because it has become a bit of a joke and a disaster. Under Labor's original plan, the National Broadband Network was to be rolled out in Kingsford Smith from 1 July 2015. The rollout was to start in the suburbs of Kensington and Kingsford and gradually over the course of a couple of years work its way east and south to deliver all residents in our community access to a world-class fibre optic to the premises National Broadband Network. Under our plan, Labor was to begin that process on 1 July 2015—a process which would have delivered speeds of up to 100 megabits per second for residents and businesses across our community.

When the Abbott-Turnbull government came to office, what did they do to our community? They stopped the rollout of the NBN in our community and completely took Kingsford Smith off the rollout map. There are 75,210 premises in our community that are eligible to be connected to the National Broadband Network. Do you know how many premises have been connected to the Turnbull government's fibre-to-the-node system? Not one; zero premises in Kingsford Smith have been connected to the fibre-to-the-node network. All this government has managed so far is some fibre to the basement to a handful of apartments. According to the government's rollout plan, not a single existing stand-alone house in Kingsford Smith will get this government's second-rate NBN by 2016, as promised by this government.

What a joke this has become for our community when it comes to rolling out the NBN! And it is a second-rate system. Labor was planning fibre to the premises because that is world class; that is the leading technology. Instead, this government is rolling out second-rate technology, fibre to the node, and then asking consumers to access that via the outdated copper network in their streets. The copper network was installed before Neil Armstrong walked on the moon. That is how old this system is. But this government expects Australians to connect their businesses and their homes through this second-rate telecommunications network.

I will read some of the testimonials from people who have been connected under the Turnbull government's fibre-to-the-node system, because I think they perfectly highlight what this government is doing in terms of delivering a second-rate system. Mr Taylor, from Gorokan on the Central Coast of New South Wales, says:

At night, the new FTTN National Broadband Network service is now considerably slower than my previous ADSL service ... the significant reduction in speed is unacceptable ...

Mr Gratton, from Newcastle, says:

It almost makes me pine for the ADSL2+ connection that I had ... I sincerely hope that the farce that the NBN roll-out has become will end soon.

That is what people are saying about the government's NBN system of fibre to the node. That is a preview for people in Kingsford Smith. This is the sort of system that the government is trying to saddle our community with. This is what the government has in store for the people of Kingsford Smith. The government plans to saddle our community with a second-rate telecommunications system that will cost consumers more and, in some cases, will be slower than their current ADSL2 service.

Overall, this system that the current government has put in place has become somewhat of a disaster. There is a clear difference between what Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said he would deliver and what is actually being delivered in the Australian community. The Prime Minister said that the overall cost of his system would be \$29.5 billion. It is actually costing \$56 billion. The government has doubled the cost of the rollout. The Prime Minister said that the cost of fibre to the node per home would be \$600. The actual cost is \$1,600. The Prime Minister said that it would cost \$55 million to fix up the copper network. It is actually costing Australian taxpayers \$641 million to fix the copper network. John Howard sold the copper network to Telstra, and what does this Prime Minister do? He buys it back to install outdated technology—and it is costing double what he said it would cost.

When it comes to the NBN, this government has completely ballsed it up and it is costing our community and consumers much more than they ever thought it would.

Debate adjourned.