



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Federation Chamber

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Carbon Pricing

SPEECH

Tuesday, 20 March 2012

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Page 3615
Questioner
Speaker Broadbent, Russell, MP

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Mr BROADBENT (McMillan) (16:16): A breath of fresh air came through with the *Age* newspaper this morning when the Baillieu government announced it will be looking to allocate further areas of brown coal for use in the brown coal electricity production industry in Victoria. For the first time a government has been brave enough to say that about this magnificent resource of brown coal that has allowed lesser priced electricity to our manufacturing industries in Victoria and made us more competitive nationally and internationally. This brown coal resource is terribly important to our economy and mostly it is an advantage that is spread all the way through the community.

The detriment to this, though, is the government's carbon tax. I do not want a carbon tax, because it affects my electorate directly, not only in the area of electricity production but in increasing the price of electricity for every business, for every small business, for every farmer, for every manufacturer, for every grower, for every agency of any sort that contributes to our national health and wellbeing. For me this carbon tax is becoming personal. Do I want to reduce our emissions? Yes, of course I do. But do I want to reduce our emissions to give us a disadvantage at this stage in the full knowledge that it will make my country less competitive internationally, it will make my state less competitive and it will make my growers and farmers and dairy producers less competitive? We struggle with comparing ourselves competitively with New Zealand now. We have this fantastic future in food production through dairy as we sell into Asia and we sell into our near neighbouring countries. But importantly, if this carbon tax is not knocked off before July through some change of heart by the government, we are going to have this imposed on us and it will be of great detriment to every family that works in my community.

The supposed benefits that are going to be traded to them are of no benefit in the long run because that tax is there forever and therefore affects our power stations, our productive capacity, the things that the Victorian state government wants to do that are positive for Australians and Victorians and their jobs, especially for people in my electorate. Imagine you are pushing the costs on a dairy farm as hard as you can possibly go and then you have a massive hike in electricity prices. That is what is going to happen in every seat right across Australia, but my particular electorate will be affected more than any of them because we have the distances, we have the farmers, we have the coal, we have the coal production workers. That is how we are affected. We are going to receive the full brunt of this ubiquitous carbon tax produced by the Labor government.