



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Federation Chamber**

**CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS**

**Renewable Energy Target**

**SPEECH**

**Tuesday, 7 February 2017**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

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**Speaker** Kelly, Craig, MP

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**Mr CRAIG KELLY** (Hughes) (16:08): Firstly, I would like to note the change we have here of the artwork in the Federation Chamber. It is very pleasing to have Billy Hughes, whom my seat is named after, standing behind me as I give an address here.

It has certainly been a very warm summer in Sydney. We have had many long and hot nights. But the reality is we actually did not beat the heatwave we had back in 1896, that record of nine consecutive days above 35 degrees. The reason I raise this is that, due to the cost of electricity, there are many people in Sydney and in Western Sydney especially, where the temperature is several degrees hotter than the coast, who have been unable to afford to turn on their air conditioning.

I know that many on the other side of this House like to go on about inequality. The greatest inequality that we have in our country at the moment is for those who, on a hot day, are unable to afford to turn their air conditioning on. We have an obligation. It should be an obligation upon every single one of us in this parliament to do everything we can to make electricity affordable. And yet we see those on the other side still continuing with the most absurd 50 per cent renewable energy target. That may have been a nice ideological position to have one or two years ago, but today we have the living experiment in South Australia of what happens when you have these unrealistic renewable energy targets. It doesn't only make your energy supply intermittent and unreliable; it doesn't only drive businesses out of business; it has a real effect on households and families, and the effect is greater on low-income households and low-income families. If you cannot afford to turn on your air conditioning on a hot day when the temperature gets above 40 degrees, there is something very, very wrong with the policies coming out of this parliament.

I would call on those on the other side of the chamber to please reconsider your policy. Think what you are doing. Think about the harm that you are doing to the very people you profess that you are trying to assist. I hope that, in the years to come, both sides of this parliament get together to ensure that we do everything we can to put pressure on to lower electricity prices. (*Time expired*)