



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PROOF

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Energy

SPEECH

Monday, 20 August 2018

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Date Monday, 20 August 2018	Source House
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Questioner	Responder
Speaker O'Brien, Ted, MP	Question No.

Mr TED O'BRIEN (Fairfax) (13:49): If the Queensland state government were to write down its network assets, or even half of them, it would have a material impact on electricity prices. But, when I raised the prospect last Friday, the idea copped a public rebuke from the Palaszczuk government as a thought-bubble not worthy of consideration. Why? Why is Queensland Labor not prepared to seriously consider writing down its network assets? There can only be three reasons: (1) they're cynically putting cheap politics ahead of cheap power by encouraging Queenslanders to blame the federal government and not the state for their pain; or (2) they have a secret plan to privatise their assets, and so the last thing they want to do is to write them down, for fear it'll compromise a potential sale price; or (3) they want to keep charging Queenslanders a secret energy tax, under the guise of electricity bills—bills that are unnecessarily expensive to cover over-inflated, gold-plated, often monopolised assets—and also to cover debt, borrowed by government entities and effectively laundered back to state coffers in the form of special dividends. It's time that this racket was exposed and cleaned up. If the state Labor government cannot run the state's finances, it should not be gouging consumers to cover its incompetence.