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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PROOF

MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Energy

SPEECH

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SPEECH

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Speaker O'Brien, Ted MP	Question No.

Mr TED O'BRIEN (Fairfax) (15:25): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker—including a thank you for your ruling. It's a reminder to all of us to be very mindful of the importance of dates in this place.

I start this MPI by reflecting on the date of 3 December 2021, for that was the day the Labor Party launched its Powering Australia plan. That was the date when the now Prime Minister first made his promise to reduce household power bills by \$275. That promise—broken. On 5 December 2021, in making Labor's 'Plan for a Better Future' speech, the now Prime Minister promised the Australian people that household power bills would be reduced by \$275; that promise is broken. On 9 March 2022, the now Prime Minister, in a speech to the *AFR* at its 'new platform for growth' conference, promised the Australian people that household power bills would be reduced by \$275. That promise—broken. On 1 May 2022, the now Prime Minister promised the Australian people he would reduce power prices for households by \$275; that promise is broken. On 7 May 2022, the now Prime Minister promised at another Labor launch that they would reduce power prices for Australian households by \$275; that promise has since been broken. On 18 May 2022, at the National Press Club, the now Prime Minister made it very clear to the Australian people that he had a solid bond with them, and he made a promise to reduce household power bills by \$275; that promise has since been broken.

You see, Deputy Speaker Claydon, dates do matter, and so, too, do promises. All I've rattled off here is half a dozen of the times when the Prime Minister and the Labor Party had promised the Australian people to reduce household power bills by \$275. On 97 occasions this promise was made to the Australian people. It's not just the Prime Minister who is at fault here; every single member of the Labor Party who sits opposite is at fault and is guilty of breaking this promise. Every single Labor Party MP and candidate went to the last election promising constituents in their electorates that their household power bills would come down by \$275. Every single time they made that promise, they were making a promise that would not be delivered—a promise that, instead, would be broken. Yet we have question after question from the coalition put to the Prime Minister during question time, raising issues on behalf of constituents—families that are struggling, small businesses that are struggling—asking the Prime Minister if he will commit to the \$275 promise. But the Prime Minister refuses to make that commitment. He won the election on the back of that promise and now he is breaking the hearts of Australian households and their budgets by breaking that very promise.

Every single Labor MP that is going to stand up as a part of this debate and try and defend their record, try and defend their Prime Minister, is standing up as part of a protection racket, trying to protect a prime minister who has told an untruth to the Australian people. He sits here at every single question time and seeks to bat away questions that come on behalf of constituents, on behalf of Australian families, who are amidst a cost-of-living crisis today. This prime minister is completely removed, completely out of touch, and the protection racket no doubt will continue over the next 20, 30 or 40 minutes as Labor MPs come up and try to defend the fact that they broke a promise of a \$275 reduction in household power bills.

The Prime Minister is from New South Wales. There are parts of New South Wales that, by the end of next financial year, will have seen their average power bill go up by \$933 since the Prime Minister made that promise.

Mr Wallace: How much?

Mr TED O'BRIEN: 'How much?' the member for Fisher very wisely asks. Power prices will go up by \$933. Do you know how much they promised to get them down by?

Mr Wallace: \$275!

Mr TED O'BRIEN: The member for Fisher wins the prize today. If you add the \$275 to the \$933 and round it off, basically the Prime Minister has promised to reduce power bills by \$1,200 more than they are actually going to pay. That's the variance: \$1,200. So anybody in Sydney, especially Western Sydney, which is represented in part by the minister responsible, the Minister for Climate Change and Energy, next time you see the minister,

make sure you tell him he owes you \$1,200. Next time you see the Prime Minister, make sure you tell him he owes you \$1,200. Anybody in New South Wales, next time you see a Labor MP, tell them they owe you \$1,200.

There was a Western Sydney mum of three who was reported on in the *Daily Telegraph* last week. This mum of three has already made the decision that in winter, especially if it gets tough, she won't be able to turn on the heating. This is a mum of three kids. She won't be able to turn on the heating, so instead it's blankets and socks. She's already planning ahead for the winter because this government has broken its promise of a \$275 reduction in household power bills.

Ms McBain: In 10 years, a decade, you didn't land one.

Mr TED O'BRIEN: I take the interjection from the minister at the table here, talking about a decade. She's right. She's right in two parts. Firstly, it was a decade that saw power prices come down. In the last term of government alone—this is probably why the minister is so interested—household power bills came down by eight per cent, businesses by 10 per cent, industry by 12 per cent—

Honourable members interjecting—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Claydon): Member for Fairfax, just be quiet for a moment, please. There are a lot of interjections going on, and I am finding it quite difficult to hear. I'm hearing a lot of interjections. Just dial it down, otherwise I will rule on you.

Mr TED O'BRIEN: In the last term of government alone, household prices went down by eight per cent, business prices down by 10 per cent, industry prices down by 12 per cent. Under this government, prices are going up. We've already spoken about how much they're going up. The draft DMO was announced last week. These are retail prices that are going to be going up from 1 July this year: in New South Wales households, there'll be an increase of \$564; in South Australia, it's \$485 up; in South-East Queensland, it's \$383 up; in regional Queensland, it's \$430 up; in Victoria it's \$426 up.

We're talking about a decade—a decade in which the Coalition was able to get the balance right. We reduced emissions, kept the economy strong and kept prices down. Labor had a decade of dithering, a decade to put a policy together. And what do they do? They put a policy together, the core promise of which is a reduction in household power bills by \$275. Has that promise been delivered or broken? It has been broken, and every single Labor MP is guilty. Last Christmas people were told they would receive relief from this government flowing in April. We've since heard they're not going to get that relief in April at all. This government is breaking promises in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis, and there is no greater promise they have broken than that of the \$275 reduction in household power bills.