

**NATIONAL ELECTRICITY (NORTHERN TERRITORY) (NATIONAL UNIFORM LEGISLATION)
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL
Serial 75**

Mr MALEY (Mining and Energy)(in reply): Madam Speaker, in giving my closing speech I will address some of the questions and comments from those opposite.

The Leader of the Opposition said that her main goal is to ensure households are protected. We agree on that. To make sure households are protected, do not vote for Albanese. He promised everyone a \$275 reduction in their energy bills. Did that happen? No, it did not happen at all.

She spoke about rising costs. Just imagine where we would be if we our gas industry had been flowing two years ago. If the Labor government had not stopped the gas industry for two years, which put us behind by many years, imagine where we would be in relation to electricity now.

We know that for a long time energy in the Northern Territory has come from gas. Gas is used to fire our generators.

We talk about renewables, and I have some figures about that. I am sure that the Leader of the Opposition did not mean to mislead the House on purpose. I am sure she has made a mistake, but I will correct what she said about that 7% figure.

What is our plan? It can be said in three words: reliable, affordable and secure electricity. That is what it is all about.

I remind the house that the CSO (community service obligation) helps Territory households pay their bills. That is the government helping Territorian residents pay about \$2,000 a year off their electricity bill. I have just spoken to the Treasurer. He told me that we have about the second-cheapest power price per kilowatt in Australia. In two years we have made sure that we have reliable and affordable power.

The Opposition Leader talks about her plan for abundant use of renewables and tariffs. I think the Leader of the Opposition is trying to rewrite history. It was a Labor government that cut tariffs from 18c to 9.8c. Then it cut the battery install scheme from \$6,000 to \$5,000. When we came into office, we doubled it; the amount of money for batteries went up to \$12,000. We delivered that promise to a tee. We spent all the money; promised we would do it and we did. We delivered what we promised.

That takes me to the 7% figure that she spoke about. I have figures from Power and Water. Renewable energy from 1 July to 29 September 2024, when Labor was in power, was 18.6%—that is the renewable energy penetration—and fossil fuels were 78.7%. That was in the last year of Labor's eight years in government, and its target was 50% renewables by 2030. A report was written and every page was redacted. Labor was scared, because it contained information that we would never get to that target. She talked about the target provider framework; that is code for we will never get there. That is how ridiculous Labor was.

Let me tell you about the renewals report, and I will be clear. From 29 June to 27 September 2026, when we came to office, renewables were up to 25.6%. We had more renewables in the system in two years. Our policy is affordable, reliable, secure electricity. The Labor government had eight years and it got to 18.6% in its little code as a framework. Labor members knew they would never get there and the evidence is they redacted the report on every page except the front and back cover.

Talking about fossil fuels, when Labor was in power, after eight years of its plan, fossil fuels were 78%. With two years of us in government, it was 71%.

As I said at the beginning, the Leader of the Opposition did not intend to mislead parliament, but the figures are there. To refresh people's memories again, eight years of Labor got 18.62% and two years of the CLP got 25.6% in renewable accreditation into the system, with fossil fuels down from 78% to 71%.

Labor members do not like the truth and they flip and flop over there. We know they support gas then they do not support gas. They support housing then they do not support housing. They are going back and forth. We know that they support chaos and misinformation. We do not know what is going on.

I will talk about Labor's history regarding power and energy. I will start with the blackout. In November 2020 gas supply was cut; 49,000 homes had no power under Labor. In February 2024 another 20,000 customers

lost power—in the dark at dinner time. In 2023–24 there was an average of 2.6 interruptions, and in Katherine 6.7. That is what happened. Imagine losing power six or seven times a year. That is what happens with Labor chaos.

We are making sure that the energy system is secure. I will now talk about gas. In 2023 the Utilities Commission told the Labor government that investment decisions were needed then. In 2024 these warnings were there. What happened with the gas? Blacktip fell away. It did not happen overnight; it was declining slowly. Labor knew about it. What did it do? Nothing. It did not do anything.

Members interjecting.

Mr MALEY: No, sorry, I might have said something a bit wrong in that. Labor bought expensive gas from INPEX because it put the moratorium on our Beetaloo gas, which has enough gas to power the nation for 200 years.

We know that the Utilities Commission warned the Labor government that 185 megawatts of Channel Island power was due to retire. What did it do? Nothing.

We have increased the penetration of solar and decreased renewables. That is our plan and it is working. Our plan is affordable, reliable, secure and working well.

The Leader of the Opposition asked what is happening and what is the next step with NTESMO. The Utilities Commission is undertaking the 2027 to 2032 system control review. Public consultation closed on 4 August. The Utilities Commission published an initial proposal for feedback on 9 June. Now the Utilities Commission is making draft recommendations. Things are on track in relation to this.

I thank the scrutiny committee and the Member for Johnston. Even though I find a lot of her work is irrelevant and she talks a lot of nonsense, I agree with her. I thank them for doing the work and for their report.

What does this Bill do? It fixes the National Electricity Rules so that they apply to the Territory as of 31 July 2025. The Territory can decide how we move forward. Until now, every change for the national electricity market flowed straight into our rules, and it has been like running a business where the rules keep changing back and forth. We set a line in the sand, and now we can get on with making sure we have affordable, reliable and secure electricity moving forward.

I turn to the features of the Bill. First, it fixes a version. Whenever the national regulation rules and guidelines apply, as enforced from time to time, they will now apply as of 31 July 2025. We are amending that so it is a certain date.

Second, it switches off the national rulemaking for the Northern Territory. Neither the Australian Energy Market Commission or South Australian Energy minister will be able to change our rules.

Third, it fixes 13 AER (Australian Energy Regulator) Guideline instruments as they are at 31 July, so the guidance matches the rules.

Fourth, it switches off the provisions of the 31–25, the year 2025 rules that do not suit the Northern Territory.

Fifth, it updates key definitions so that the frozen rules can be read correctly.

I note that the opposition and the crossbench said that they will support the Bill. I thank them for that. This is part of the plan of delivering that reliable, affordable and secure energy to the Northern Territory.

One question asked was: why did we pick 31 July 2025? That is when there was a considerable change in the rules. The Australian Electricity Market Commission suggested that date. It wrote to us and said that this is when we think it should be because there is a whole lot of detailed rules after that which do not apply to the Territory. The Leader of the Opposition was right; we have our own system. We are not connected to the market on the east coast which is where these rules are designed. This lets us manage our own electricity market and move forward and make rules and a recommendation so that we could continue NTESMO and rules that suit the Northern Territory and not rely upon interstate rules from the east coast and South Australia making rules for us.

I have answered all the questions that I heard when I made some notes about the contributions today.

A member interjecting.

Mr MALEY: The drafting errors—thank you for that.

We will do those, but they are in regulations. When we fix the regulations we will make those amendments. We accept all the recommendations of the scrutiny committee, and they will come into play when we make the regulations. They are not in the legislation; they are in the regulations. We accept all those recommendations.