

SPEECH

House of Assembly_ Wednesday 20th March 2013_Page 4857

WIND FARMS _ Debate resumed.

Mr BROCK (Frome) (12:48): I will be very quick because I understand there are a few more who want to speak before the lunch break. Let me say straight out: I am very supportive of renewable energy and certainly it is the way we should be going for the future. However, wind turbines are not the only renewable energy we should be looking at. I believe we should also be looking at solar opportunities in conjunction with wind turbines to be able to go forward in this great state.

In my electorate, I have wind turbines at Clements Gap, the Clare Valley, Waterloo and Snowtown—with the Snowtown second stage being built at the moment—and it does come as a great economic support for those communities. I was at the Snowtown community association on the way to Adelaide on Monday night and they were talking about the project there, and the deli, the hotel, the accommodation and so forth are all benefiting from that.

One of the things that I wanted to make mention of is that generally the public is very supportive of wind turbines but I have one location in my electorate—Waterloo—where it is a big issue. It has decimated the whole of the community to the degree that there are some issues with the direction of the wind and the turbines. Certainly, there is no proven history of any health issues; however, it has split that community and that is a bit of an issue from my point of view.

The member for Goyder has made it very clear that we are here to represent people, and we have to take on both sides of that. Let me just say also that the landowners themselves who have wind turbines on their land do reap a financial reward, and that money is then spent back into the local community, which is a great economic boost.

I certainly think that we should be looking at not only the wind turbines but other opportunities. I also think that, going forward, we must look at the iconic locations and that maybe there are certain locations in this state where we should not be putting wind turbines because of the artistic image, etc., and I encourage looking at that issue when they give the approvals. I will certainly be supporting this, but I have concerns for the people of Waterloo, in particular, because there is a bit of an issue down there.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Cheltenham—Premier, Treasurer, Minister for State Development, Minister for the Public Sector, Minister for the Arts) (12:56): I thank all members for their contribution to the debate, especially those members who have indicated their support for the motion. Just to remind members, the purpose of this motion is to send a clear expression of intention from this parliament about our commitment to wind energy in South Australia. The reason that has become urgent is that a whole range of industry sectors have expressed their alarm at the way in which the present debate is emerging across the nation and in particular in relation to South Australia, where one of the major parties has called for a moratorium. So, it is important that this parliament expresses its clear intentions about this matter so that we can create a very strong message that this is a stable and secure investing environment.

In that regard, it is disappointing that the Leader of the Opposition has not made a contribution to this debate. It is telling, I think, that he has decided not to make a contribution. It would have been an opportunity for him to stand together with me in making it clear that the Liberal Party stands together with the Labor Party in supporting this position. Instead, we have had a series of contributions which have largely cast doubt on the sentiments that exist within the motion that we promote.

It is disappointing that the Liberal Party has not chosen to take the opportunity to resolve its internal debate. To the extent that it has resolved its internal debate, it seems as though the member for Waite has not prevailed, which is disappointing. My intelligence had been that he was going to lead the debate internally within the Liberal Party to try to overturn what was, I think, quite a damaging and nonsensical proposition of this moratorium.

This was an opportunity to do that so that we could wipe off that idea and send a very clear message to the investor community. Nevertheless, a resolution, if it is indeed passed, will still make an important contribution to expressing the views of this chamber, especially if it is passed with as much support as we can muster. So I urge members to vote for this motion. It is important for the future prosperity of South Australia and the health of our community.

Motion carried.

[Sitting suspended from 12:59 to 14:00]