

Speeches

Thursday, 7 February 2013

## **CARBON TAX**

Mr BROCK (Frome) (12:30): I also rise to talk to the motion by the Hon. Bob Such. I will make it quite clear that I am very interested in and aware of changes in our environment, making sure that we protect our communities going forward, ensuring that we have new technology, and to look at ways of not only improving our technology but also the way we operate and the way we live. However, as the member for Mount Gambier has indicated, I think this is the biggest rip-off of all time. It is a tax, and there are lots of people out there and industries that are still polluting. They can still pay and they can still pollute but, at the same time, if you are doing that, you are not creating any improvement in the pollution.

I will just go back to an issue when I was the mayor of the Port Pirie Regional Council. I went to a climate change conference in Adelaide. I went to that before lunch and I was convinced when I went to lunch that we had to do all these issues and, as the member for Port Adelaide has indicated, look at the scientific evaluation and the advice from the scientists. When I went to lunch I was very convinced that we had to do all these things to improve the issue, to reduce climate change. After lunch, I went back to the second stage of that conference. Again, there were professional and qualified scientists there and the view was completely opposite. How can anyone make a decision when there are two different views out there on one day on how we can control climate change?

As the member for Mount Gambier has indicated, since day dot climate change has been going on all the time. There has always been carbon in the environment, but it is a very small issue compared with other issues that we have to face. If we are going to go forward with reducing our carbon, we need to do it worldwide, not in a small environment.

Currently, the way it happens at the moment, the revenue that is collected from us here should go back into industries to be able to improve, but there are many industries and one of those industries was my ex-employer at Port Pirie, the major employer of our community, Nyrstar Port Pirie smelter. They are paying \$10 million a year—and I stand to be corrected on that official amount—in carbon tax and at the same time they still need to try to trade on

the world environment and the world market. They also have to try to improve their facility there to reduce their carbon footprint and the emissions to be able to reduce that tax.

What should happen, as the member for Mount Gambier indicated, is that industries that were polluting should have been given a time frame to reduce their pollution and, if they did not do it in that particular time frame, then they should be penalised. What happens at the moment, from my understanding, is that the revenue goes back to certain industries. The alumina industry does not get anything, the lead smelter in Port Pirie does not get anything, but the zinc smelter at Hobart gets a portion. It is to do with the criteria.

I am certainly one to safeguard and to produce the best ways for our children, our grandchildren and so on, but I say there is a way of doing it. I just think that the carbon tax, and the way it has come in, has been handled wrongly and, as the member for Reynell has indicated, it has been done by the commonwealth government. We have to wear that currently at the moment, but certainly I am not in favour of the carbon tax in its present form and I certainly will be voting against this motion.