

Queensland Parliament Hansard Green


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SUBJECT: Cairns Electorate, Climate March

MEMBER: Mr PYNE

### **Cairns Electorate, Climate March**

 **Mr PYNE** (Cairns—ALP) (10.18 pm): I rise to talk about the climate march that took place in Cairns last Saturday, 28 November. I would like to acknowledge Andy McPherson, Nina Bailey and the organisers from the Cairns Climate Action Network who helped organise the march. I was speaking to a journalist and I tried to ascertain why climate change is not covered more in the local media. The reason that I was given is that people are more concerned with what is happening today than what may be happening in five or 10 years. I did my best to set this journalist straight and explained that the impacts of climate change are being felt now. In many Pacific countries, saltwater intrusion is taking place as people lose their village homes. In the Torres Strait, seawalls are being built to protect people's homes from rising sea levels. Of course, this is not just a problem for Pacific nations; it is also a problem for low-lying cities such as Cairns.

063 Every level of government should be doing something to address climate change and sea-level rise. This includes local councils. Councils have responsibility for planning, and they should base their planning schemes around climate change and sea-level rise. Of course, it is very hard when your council consists, as it does in Cairns, of a group of people who are climate sceptics. People such as councillors Terry James, John Schilling and Mayor Bob Manning either completely deny climate change or say, 'The climate always changes. It is not really a problem, is it?' Of course, Mayor Bob Manning had his heyday in the 1970s. That is fine, but he wants to take our city back there. We cannot be going back to the 1970s. We need to address the problems now and the problems of the future. Climate change is just one of those. We also need to be creating the jobs for the economy of the future, not looking for jobs in the industries of the past.

I would love to hear more people in this place talk about climate change and sea-level rise. I do hear about it sometimes from those opposite, but it normally takes the form of giggling, which I find quite bizarre, especially when it comes from members who represent the Gold Coast or the Sunshine Coast, where climate change and sea-level rise are very real threats for those who live there. The changing face of the federal government should be no cause for comfort, with the only solution an emissions trading scheme. We will never see that under the LNP.