



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMETARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PROOF

ADJOURNMENT

Renewable Energy

SPEECH

Tuesday, 12 February 2013

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

<p>Date Tuesday, 12 February 2013 Page 88 Questioner Speaker Schultz, Alby, MP</p>	<p>Source House Proof Yes Responder Question No.</p>
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Mr SCHULTZ (Hume) (21:30): The renewable energy target was designed to assist with climate change by reducing Australia's greenhouse gas emissions. The unfortunate reality of this is that it has become what I have described as 'the biggest government sponsored fraud in the history of our country'.

Yesterday, Senator John Madigan asked questions of the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency regarding the operation of the Waubra Wind Farm in Ballarat, Victoria. The Waubra Wind Farm is not compliant with its planning approval. Under the Renewable Energy (Electricity) Act 2000, state planning compliance is a prerequisite for a power station's eligibility for Commonwealth accreditation. Without lawful accreditation, a power station is not eligible to receive government subsidy. In this case, I am referring to being issued with large-scale renewable energy certificates by the Clean Energy Regulator. The issuing of RECs via fraudulent applications could well be considered to be the proceeds of crime—a white-collar crime that is ultimately financed by fleecing the Australian electricity consumer.

I have recently sighted written communication from Mr Paul Jarman, of the Department of Planning and Community Development in Victoria, which confirms that the Waubra Wind Farm is not compliant with planning legislation. The Clean Energy Regulator has issued the Waubra Wind Farm with large-scale RECs illegally since it began operation in July 2009. As per the renewable energy target, the monetary value of the large-scale RECs issued to Waubra exceeds \$80.6 million. This wind farm has not ever satisfied the terms of state planning compliance for accreditation.

Current court cases suggest that non-compliance with state planning legislation is common in the wind industry in Australia. Since the implementation of the renewable energy target in April 2001, over 195 million RECs have been created by the Clean Energy Regulator. RECs issued are expected to exceed \$50 billion. In my electorate of Hume, the REC subsidy for new turbines, excluding existing ones, is set to reach \$500 million to \$1 billion per year. Wind turbine developments are issued with large-scale RECs to the value of approximately \$500,000 per turbine per year. I am starting to be provided with proof of developments that have issued falsified information in relation to

planning and noise compliance. There are many cases of wind farms that have been approved with grossly inaccurate environmental assessments in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.

RECs are being issued fraudulently to \$2 shelf companies that follow the model of declaring bankruptcy only to be reborn under a new name. Australia's biggest corporate collapse, Babcock and Brown in 2011, recorded losses upwards of \$10 billion. Babcock and Brown Wind was then renamed Infigen Energy. The large majority of Australian wind farms are owned by foreign companies. That is billions of dollars going overseas to fraudulent corporations under the guise of renewable energy. Queensland's Ergon Energy confirmed to a Senate inquiry in October 2012 that energy costs would be the predominant driver of increased electricity prices due to the renewable energy target placing upward pressure on wholesale electricity prices. We are all paying more for our electricity, and for no evidential benefit to the environment.

Wind turbines should not be classed as renewable energy as the industry is unsure of whether they are actually reducing greenhouse gas emissions or not. Studies of performance based data suggest that wind turbines do not reduce emissions. Wind turbines are industrial power generators that require baseload power to operate and are inefficient, intermittent, damaging to the environment and very expensive to the electrical consumer in Australia. People in the Gillard government have vested interests in electricity prices continuing to skyrocket.

A major developer of wind farms in South Australia is Pacific Hydro, a company under the control of trade union industry superannuation funds that have close links in the Gillard government. Pacific Hydro operates the Clements Gap wind farm and now wants to develop wind farms at Keyneton and Gulnare. The Clement Hill wind farm is worth approximately \$13.5 million a year and \$21 million in RECs issued. The chairman of Pacific Hydro is Garry Weaven of the Australian Council of Trade Unions. Pacific Hydro is owned by Industry Super Holdings through the Australian Infrastructure Fund.

The snouts in the easy-money-making renewable energy trough are many and varied. There is an urgent need to eliminate conflicts of interest within our

government. The only reason people are not rioting in the streets about the unjustified— (*Time expired*)