

RENEWABLE ENERGY

673. Mr B.S. WYATT to the Minister for Climate Change:

First, I acknowledge and welcome Mr Frank Birrell and the students from Holy Rosary School who have joined us all the way from Derby.

Can the minister inform the house of recent developments in attracting renewable energy technologies to Western Australia?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN replied:

I thank the member for Victoria Park for his question. The Gallop government -
Several members interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Sorry; the Carpenter and Gallop governments, in their ascension in this place in the past seven years, have already demonstrated their absolute commitment to the challenge that climate change presents to the people of Western Australia and, of course, the leadership role that we need to play in Australia. It is very sad when we look at the dearth of leadership that has been shown by the current federal government in its approach. It has had to be dragged kicking and screaming to understand the importance of responding appropriately and effectively to climate change in the future. Whether we look at securing our water future or expanding our public transport system with the \$1.6 billion investment in the southern suburbs rail, or whether we look at our work on energy efficiency, we can see that there is a very clear track record of this government's approach to addressing the climate change challenge that faces us all.

I was very pleased last week to announce the first round of grants from the low emissions energy development fund, which is known as the LEED fund. This fund is part of the Premier's \$110 million climate change action statement package that was released earlier this year in May. This fund is one of the mechanisms that we intend to use to approach the target of achieving a 60 per cent reduction in the state's greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. We have, of course, acknowledged that we must continue to encourage innovation in low-emission technologies. With the announcement this week, this fund will offer, as part of the first round, \$8.5 million in the 2008-09 financial year to encourage investment towards technologies, particularly those investment technologies that reflect our strengths in Western Australia, be they geothermal energy, bioenergy or renewal energy technologies such as wind, wave and solar power. This innovative fund will allow industry and the community to invest in these low-emission technologies so that we can continue to aim to the target I mentioned.

It is interesting to look at the approach that has been taken by this government and at what it has said about the climate change challenge, compared with the response from the lot on the opposite side of the house and the federal Howard government. We now know very clearly that nuclear power is absolutely on the agenda of the Howard government and will be supported by members opposite. Despite the debate in this chamber and the criticism from those opposite during the recent debate on the Nuclear Facilities Prohibition Bill, we know very clearly that Western Australians will face a nuclear future under a future Liberal government. The question we will be asking the people in all electorates is whether they will put up their hands for a nuclear power plant in their backyard. I doubt it.

Several members interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: When a Rudd-led Labor government is elected on 24 November, we will know that we have a Prime Minister of this country who understands specifically the challenge that this country faces on climate change. Those sceptics opposite who continue to deny that this is a challenge to us will hang their heads in shame, because we will have a Prime Minister on 24 November who understands the challenge, who will work with the state governments and who will ensure that this is a key priority for government into the future.

Several members interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: This issue is about our future and it is about making sure that we understand that. That is why the investment fund that I announced a few days back is part of our armoury in tackling this important issue that is denied by those who sit opposite and by the Howard government. That is one of the key reasons that when people go to the polls on 24 November, they will know very clearly that there will be a stark difference in policy and in action, and they will vote for the Rudd government because Kevin Rudd as the leader of the party has this issue at the forefront of policy.