

MEDIA RELEASE

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KAP Callide candidate says Collie's fate could be their fate, too

KATTER'S Australian Party's (KAP) candidate for the June 18 Callide byelection, Adam Burling, says the Western Australian government's plan to shut down two coal-fired power stations in the rural community of Collie, south of Perth, is a fate certain to strike his own community unless Qld State governments commit to long-term investments in coal-powered generation.¹

Mr Burling, a coalminer, said entire communities in regional Australia would be devastated if the current trend of demonising industries such as his continued.

"Make no mistake, what's happening in Collie—where you have the vast majority of the earners in that town wondering how they'll manage a mortgage when their incomes run out in seven years—will be our lot if we don't get certain commitments from the State government."

Mr Burling said he felt towns like Biloela which rely heavily on the employment created by the power station and nearby Callide mine could lose a significant number of relatively high-paying jobs whose incomes support hundreds of businesses and thousands of families, in the drive toward renewables.

"Communities like ours which have been built around these conventional energy industries are in the government's cross-hairs.

"We talk about the transition to renewables as if its just about this or that energy source, but for us its visceral. We inhabit that, we live that.

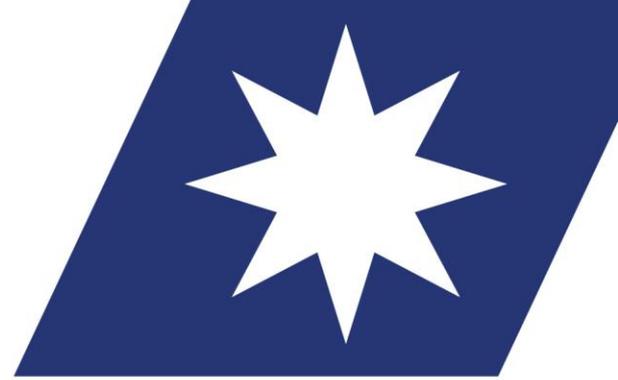
"The news from WA hits pretty hard because you think 'that's us; we are Collie.'

"I feel like I'm watching my own life play out and those of my neighbours in what's going on there."

Mr Burling said he was motivated to put his hand up to run for the seat of Callide in the byelection in part because of how communities like Biloela were getting lost in the "politics of net zero."

He said the Callide byelection is a watershed moment to send a message about the impact of the pursuit of net zero policies in Queensland's regions.

¹ [Synergy coal power stations including Muja to close as WA Government prioritises renewable energy - ABC News](#)



“With the focus solely on the Callide electorate there’s now a chance for us to hear the voices of those workers, farmers and business owners whose livelihoods depend on the existence of the fossil fuel industry in our region.”

Mr Burling said the current energy crisis does not give him hope that governments will be able to manage the transition to renewables.

“How on earth does a country with abundant energy supplies still end up with horrendously expensive power prices?

“The mess Australia has made of energy policy over the last two decades makes me wonder how we as a nation will manage the shift to net zero.

“There’s an abyss between the future that is being laid out in policy objectives, and the reality of how that will play out in people’s lives.”

Mr Burling said neither the State or Federal governments have yet to engage in productive conversations about what a net zero transition would look like for installations such as the Callide power station.

“We’ve got gas pipelines that go two kilometres past the power station and we could tap into that.

“If they’re worried about emissions then gas emits about 45% of what white coal does, so if they were serious about keeping open Callide they could just pipe in gas.

“There are solutions there, but governments are not even considering or even talking about them.”

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