

Submission
No 5

INQUIRY INTO THE LEASING OF ELECTRICITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially Confidential

I am appalled that any Government would sell or lease any part of OUR essential infrastructure. Electricity is the most essential commodity in modern society and to hand over control to what in all likelihood is foreign ownership is a disgrace. My concerns are mainly around the safety and reliability of the network. I live on the NSW Central Coast and we have just experienced the worst storm and damage to the Network up here since June 2007. The restoration of supply and cleanup effort by the State Owned distribution company was great - we know full well that under private operators that wouldn't have happened. There would be people without power for months if it was left up to private operators to clean up and restore. I also suspect lives would be lost. How would you stop private operators out sourcing the Emergency depts of these distribution companies to India or other foreign countries. Will the people of NSW have to ring India to report wires down or other life threatening situations during these major storms? Is that an example of Mr Baird's moving NSW forward? The roads you plan to build with the money from this "lease" will be obsolete in no time at all and will no doubt have massive tolls attached to them so not only will the people of NSW lose out on the revenue from the Networks but will be paying through the nose for the roads the money was used for. Also what happens when private owners can't afford essential maintenance? I bet the NSW govt(taxpaying residents) will have to come to the rescue like in Victoria with the bushfires down there. So the people pay even though they don't own it or control it. I suggest anyone who is involved in voting on this issue think of Enron - that is what happens when you give greedy, profit driven private operators control of essential infrastructure. The skilled experienced people who maintain these networks will no doubt be lost when these private companies look to maximise profits and cut cut cut which is what has always happened when Governments have sold or privatised anything . Who do we call then when the power goes out? Will Mike Baird or any of the other people who think this is a good idea be available to take our calls and fix the network then?