

**I wish to protest about the proposed increase in electricity in the far north Queensland region.**

Since 2006-07, power bills have already increased by 87% in real terms. The proposed increase in power bills, ranging from 9.3% to 13.6%, for regional businesses is unsustainable and unnecessary.

I fully support the FNQ Electricity Users Network (FNQ EUN) in advocating for at least a **minimum** 5% reduction in both residential and business power bills.

An increase of about 10% will affect the profitability of our business.

Our business is in the creative arts industry and, being digital, is fully reliant the electricity supply to run our computer and electronic equipment. Without electricity, we cannot operate at all. Our communication is by email, our advertising is through websites and social media, all our work is reliant on using computer and video equipment. Further electricity supply costs would prevent us expanding the business and employing staff, as plugging in and using more electronic equipment would further directly increase our costs.

It is necessary to move today's businesses into a digital environment to grow. A business that does not have a website or digital presence in electronic media will surely fail to thrive. To place massive price increases into an area where it is absolutely necessary to conduct business, will make all businesses unsustainable.

We simply cannot afford continuing price hikes which eat into our business costs.

With the Government also moving more and more towards conducting business digitally, and forcing businesses to comply with doing so, it is ludicrous that massive increases in the cost of electricity have been imposed on us.

I would like to send a clear message that regional businesses cannot cope with another increase in power bills and the regulated high costs, and I propose that electricity costs be reduced rather than increased.

I shall now hit 'send', switch off and light a candle as I have already used more than my daily electricity allocation for today in writing this submission.