FUELS AND ENERGY TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE — CURTIN UNIVERSITY

Statement by Member for Cottesloe

DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe) [12.54 pm]: On 12 November, a group of my colleagues and I visited the Fuels and Energy Technology Institute based at Curtin University, which is headed by Professor Chun-Zhu Li. This was my second visit to the facility. Professor Li and his colleagues have been carrying out truly remarkable and world-leading research in a number of areas aimed at developing sustainable renewable energy technology. I wish to particularly highlight the biomass pyrolysis technology that they have developed. I have had a keen interest in renewable energy since my university studies and have had a concern that very few technologies offer real solutions for sustainable, broadscale renewable energy at a competitive price. I believe that the biomass pyrolysis technology developed by Professor Li and his team has the potential to be the major breakthrough the world has been waiting for in this area.

In short, the technology is a very simple process that converts any biologically derived material—from plastics and domestic waste through to plantation timber—to char and a liquid fuel. The char can be used as a fuel or simply added as a broadacre soil improver to permanently store carbon for millions of years. This process is completely carbon neutral or carbon negative. The fuel can be processed as a diesel or petrol additive or replacement. The char and liquid fuel can be used for base-load energy production or energy storage.

I encourage every member of this house to visit this excellent facility and all of us to do everything in our power to keep this technology in Australia.