

QUEENSLAND ELECTION

Queensland election: Hanson to add spice with focus on electricity prices



Pauline Hanson's chief of staff James Ashby with the One Nation campaign bus in Brisbane yesterday. Picture: John Wilson.

Jamie Walker, Michael McKenna, The Australian, 8:03AM November 4, 2017

As Pauline Hanson makes her delayed entry to the Queensland election campaign this weekend, as a new poll shows support for One Nation surging.

The Galaxy poll in the Courier-Mail shows One Nation jumping to 18 per cent from 15 per cent, the LNP primary vote dropping to 32 per cent, its lowest level in five years, and suggests neither of the major parties will be able to secure a majority. The October 17 Newspoll for The Australian had One Nation on 16 per cent statewide, but internal ALP polling shows the Hanson party is pulling upwards of 20 per cent in its regional heartland.

This will put it in the frame to win in seats where it can secure a top-two finish on the primary vote with one of the major parties.

Ms Hanson will enter the fray tomorrow, vowing to "give them curry" after missing the first week of the action while on a parliamentary trip to India. The One Nation leader will take her "battler bus" on tour to regional areas where support for the protest party is concentrated.

Senator Hanson will unveil a plan to shift \$1.4 billion worth of returns from state government-owned corporations into electricity price subsidies for households, countering a Labor offer to cut \$50 from Queenslanders' power bills.

Speaking ahead of her flight home today, she told *The Weekend Australian* she would also go after the Liberal National Party for stealing One Nation policies. "One of the reasons we don't have a good government is that we don't have a good opposition," she said. "I intend to give Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk and Opposition Leader Tim Nicholls curry."

One Nation's campaign in Queensland has drifted in Senator Hanson's absence, with the party's Queensland team leader, Steve Dickson, pinned down in his Sunshine Coast electorate of Buderim. The former LNP frontbencher jumped to One Nation in January, but must overcome a 12 per cent margin to the LNP to retain the seat.

Polling conducted last month in Buderim for an industry group by ReachTEL had the LNP on a primary vote of 37 per cent, followed by One Nation on 23.2 per cent and Labor on 17.9 per cent. After preferences, this gave the LNP candidate, former army officer Brent Mickelberg, a comfortable winning margin of 67 per cent, two-party preferred, over Mr Dickson on 33 per cent.

Senator Hanson said the cost of electricity was the key concern of voters and neither of the major parties was doing enough to help. "It's the main thing affecting the whole state," she said. "I have travelled all over Queensland and people are suffering across the state, businesses are closing down and it's hurting ordinary families. "If we can get the prices down, it will lift business and investment, and more jobs will come. We want to attract people coming from the south to Queensland to do business."

In the event that the election delivers a second successive hung parliament — a primary vote in the 30 per cent range for both Labor and LNP shows this is on the cards — Senator Hanson said One Nation would be prepared to negotiate with both sides.

She rejected Ms Palaszczuk's insistence Labor would rather lose than do a deal with One Nation. "When it comes to ensuring their jobs, they will both want to sit down and talk with One Nation," she said. "I won't rule out working with

Labor or rule out working with the LNP. It will depend on who can convince us that they can deliver good government with joint policy for One Nation. They both have been arrogant, they have been treating the people like fools.”