

Energy crisis – the beginnings of a solution Lord Howell of Guildford Speech to the Lords 14.10.21

My Lords, it is obvious that in the short term, with soaring international gas prices, what can be done is understandably limited. Rescue support for heavy energy users obviously will help if it comes quickly, but should we not also consider temporarily suspending some of the heavy green surcharges, carbon penalties and the latest, rather poor idea, of taxing gas even further? For the medium term, have the real lessons been learned, namely that for an orderly and sustainable energy transition, we need more gas and electricity storage for back-up and swing supplies, a rapid sort-out of our faltering nuclear replacement programme, some coal-fired stations in reserve, and low rather than high home fuel prices to ease widespread hardship and prevent backlash?

Lord Callanan
(Con)

We are taking a range of important steps to decarbonise the electricity system and to provide more homegrown electricity generation as our supplies from the North Sea dwindle. The problem with my noble friend's argument is that providing more storage does not alleviate the high prices. Many European countries have much greater levels of gas storage, but their prices are even higher than those in the UK.