



Save Solar Tasmania: MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Community Groups urge improvements to feed-in tariff legislation

A delegation of community organisations, solar owners and solar installers will today meet with Energy Minister Bryan Green to urge changes to legislation on the feed-in tariff to be debated in parliament later today.

The delegation will present the Minister with petitions signed by over 3,800 people supporting a fairer FiT for Tasmania.

“In the rush to complete the sale of Aurora’s customers to private operators, the Government has short-changed solar owners and is missing the opportunity to build a vibrant industry base of small renewable energy projects that can create jobs and generate returns for households and businesses.” says spokesperson Jack Gilding.

“At the very time when Tasmania most needs new jobs for a modern economy, the Government has slammed the door on job creation in renewable energy,” continues Mr Gilding.

The draft legislation only became available for public scrutiny on Tuesday and it confirms the very narrow approach being taken by the government. The legislation proposes “net financial benefit to retailers” as the primary test for what is a fair FiT. The draft report* from the Tasmanian Economic Regulator (TER) released last week illustrates the problem with this definition. The very low proposed FiT of 8.282 cents is a fraction of the price retailers will charge when they resell this power, typically to people in the same street.

Aurora residential customers are informed on their bill that transmission and distribution charges make up 47.7% of the cost of their electricity.

“Solar owners who export electricity should be financially rewarded for generating electricity close to the point of use and avoiding the need for infrastructure that make up nearly half the cost of electricity,” Mr Gilding says. “The government is responsible for creating long term benefits for all Tasmanians, not short term cost savings for retailers.”

Save Solar Tasmania is proposing specific amendments to the legislation that would:

- Ensure that the setting of the FiT takes into account the long term benefits to all Tasmanian electricity consumers of building a more sustainable, efficient, competitive and decentralised energy system.
- Provide a legislated minimum FiT for projects up to 100kW as is done in Victoria. This would support the development of on-farm, commercial and community renewable energy projects, creating jobs and income in rural communities.

Save Solar Tasmania calls on the state government and the opposition to broaden the terms of reference for the TER enquiry and to accept that the government’s responsibility in energy policy is broader than just running a market for the benefit of new retailers.

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For more information

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More detailed comment on the TER draft report available in media release at http://www.solarcitizens.org.au/tas_docs

*Draft report available here: <http://bit.ly/ter-draft>