



Sutherland Shire Environment Centre

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23, September 2020

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications
PO Box 6100, Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Re: Grid Reliability Fund Bill 2020

The Sutherland Shire Environment Centre and its members have been actively involved in looking after the environment in the Sutherland Shire and beyond for close to 30 years. We are very supportive of initiatives that address the climate change crisis, including a transition to renewable energy and storage.

We support the use of the \$1 billion Grid Reliability Fund for increasing renewable energy, storage of renewable energy and to modernise the grid to accommodate the changes created by the uptake of renewable energy.

However, we strongly oppose any alteration that would allow the use of the CEFC for investments in gas. Our previous fire season should be warning enough that Australia cannot afford to expand a greenhouse gas intensive industry.

Contrary to promises from the Federal government, the previous expansion of gas in Australia caused a dramatic rise in domestic prices. There is no guarantee that a second expansion would not do the same. In addition, gas usage is in global decline and investments are likely to become stranded assets as the world moves to low emission energy.

With climate change accelerating and the plummeting costs of renewable energy and storage, there really is no sane reason to lock Australia into a high-emission future with gas. Investment in Renewable Energy creates three times as many jobs compared to a similar amount of investment in the fossil fuel industry and the Million Jobs Plan by Beyond Zero Emissions is being backed by economic experts as the most sensible way to address the COVID-caused recession.

Sincerely,

Tassia Kolesnikow
Chair, Sutherland Shire Environment Centre