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Submission No: 135

4 July 2007

The Committee Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Industry and Resources
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir/ Madam

Case Study into Renewable Energy in Australia

As Mayor of Blacktown City, the third largest Local Government Area within Australia, and representing a young, culturally diverse community approaching 300,000 residents, I write to comment on the relative state of development of selected renewable energy sectors in Australia.

Blacktown, as the first Solar City in New South Wales welcomes the exciting opportunity of greater access to world class solar and energy efficiency technology through the Solar Cities programme. The Blacktown Solar City project, in partnership with BP Solar, Integral Energy, ANZ Investment Bank, Landcom and Big Switch Projects, is a very important initiative and a major step in our efforts to address climate change and work towards being carbon neutral.

The program will provide our residents with the opportunity to reduce their electricity bills by up to 70% and make a positive contribution to the local and global environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions by some 25,000 tonnes per annum by project end.

This exciting program benefits the entire Community through a range of packages featuring solar PV packages, solar hot water, free energy audits, smart meters, demand management, cost efficient pricing and innovative financing packages for those who participate.

Solar Cities also presents an opportunity for Blacktown City to be nationally recognised as a City that has adopted a proactive approach toward energy efficiency and global warming and one that seeks to conserve and preserve its local environment.

Already this Council through its commitment to the International Cities for Climate Protection program, has been actively reducing its greenhouse gas emissions through numerous Community and Council based initiatives as well as supporting clean, renewable energy through the purchase of GreenPower.

Council has discussed the issues of climate change at length on numerous occasions and fully supports renewable energy sources. Council considers the urgent introduction of legislation placing a price on greenhouse gas pollution, and as a minimum, expanding the Mandatory Renewable Energy Target to 25% by 2020, in

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addition to ratifying the Kyoto Protocol as essential to combating climate change sustainably and ensuring a secure and sustainable energy future.

Taking such action will ensure a transition from Australia's dependency on coal as an energy source, to one which utilises a combination of clean renewable energies such as solar, wind, biomass and wave.

Blacktown City Council hopes the Australian Federal Government furthers its commitment to a clean renewable energy future, which will in turn reduce Australia's greenhouse gas emissions.

Should you require any further information regarding this matter, please contact Council's Director Environmental and Recreation Services, Liz Jeremy on 9839 6518.

Yours sincerely,


LEO KELLY
MAYOR