

To whom it may concern

I am a humble member of the Ballarat community and an advocate of sustainability and environmental issues. I write to you to express my concern of the Federal Government's Feed-in Tariff and the phasing out of the \$8000 rebate available for photovoltaic installation. It appears that this plan offers little as an incentive for the average Australian household to install photovoltaic (PV) systems.

As a member of a voluntary committee within my workplace, I have experienced many barriers to instigating changes in the workplace that will ultimately contribute to reduced carbon emissions. These barriers usually present themselves in the form of financial costs involved with implementing various sustainability initiatives. Our committee are involved with education and encouragement of staff to implement sustainable options in their homes (such as informing staff of rebates available with solar panel and water tank installation) and the Feed-in Tariff does not seem to offer the public the same incentive that is currently available for Solar Hot water Systems in Victoria.

My experience leads me to believe that the uptake of PV systems will be reduced with the Feed-in-Tariff, which will be ineffective in eventuating in reduced carbon emissions from the average household, as the average household cannot afford the initial cost of installation. I believe that the key to the uptake of initiatives that reduce our carbon imprint is to offer financial incentives for families (as well as small businesses) in the form of substantial rebates, as longer term financial savings offer very little to current budgets of everyday families and households. Financial incentives need to be substantial and obvious from the onset, otherwise the immediate cost of installation of expensive systems, regardless of combined household income, will act as a significant deterrent.

On a personal level, I too, like the average Australian citizen, am somewhat disappointed to hear of the phasing out of the \$8000 rebate and deterred to look into PV installation without substantial immediate rebates, even with any promise of the longer term advantage offered by the Feed-in Tariff. This is my reaction, even though I am somewhat environmentally aware and proactive. The cost-benefit comparison needs to be re-assessed to favourably lean towards a lower initial cost to the household in order to benefit the Australian climate and environmental future.

Regards

Maria Romiti