

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Stephen Burns
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Ballarat VIC 3350

Re: Inquiry into the **Renewable Energy (Electricity) Amendment (Feed-in-Tariff) Bill 2008**

Dear committee,

I am an active member of a community-based, non-profit climate change action group called Ballarat Renewable Energy and Zero Emissions (BREAZE) but am writing as a private citizen. I am in the process of installing solar HWS and a 2 KW photovoltaic array on my home.

In relation to renewable energy, my view is that all levels of government should be encouraging public and private investment in renewable energy. Government, especially at the national level, should focus on creating policy frameworks rather than 'picking winners' in terms of specific technology or systems. To this end:

- **A national feed-in tariff system should be introduced** [similar to MRET. Don't leave it to the States who have already introduced a variety of schemes.]
- A feed-in tariff should be paid on all renewable energy produced [**'gross'**] not just on that which isn't used in household consumption [**'net'**]. This is desirable because it ensures
 - pay-back time on investment is faster, which will encourage more installation of renewable power systems
 - those who produce clean energy are paid the premium. Under a 'net' system, energy retailers effectively buy green power from households at the general household rate (peak or off-peak) which is substantially lower than that of 'Green' power, and then sell that power to others in the grid at a premium
- The feed-in tariff rate to be paid to producers should be such that average, middle-class Australians are encouraged to install renewable power systems [the global example of how appropriately structured tariffs create huge private, household and community level investment is Germany. This is a form of public-private partnership, which is accessible to all Australians, not just corporations and allows government funding to be leveraged for maximum benefit. To

generate a significant take-up, we need a significant tariff rate. I suggest 60c per KWh or greater.]

- Any 'upper limit' on system size for a household renewable system should allow for large households and certainly no cap should be below 4-5 KW systems (e.g. the current Victorian 2 KW system cap effectively discourages households from installing anything large enough to produce consistent feed into the grid. Since most households need around a 3 KW system to cover all their own needs, a @ KW system limit means that they use all the energy they generate; no 'net' energy so no tariff payment. My own view is that the Victorian government has structured this to avoid paying feed-in tariffs while appearing to be offering the most generous tariff in the country.)
- There should be **no means-testing** of household income related to eligibility to receive feed-in tariff... the priority is to create more renewable energy systems

Thank you very much for opportunity to make a submission and I would be grateful for the opportunity to speak to the Committee, if, for instance, hearings are held in Melbourne.

Yours faithfully,

Stephen Burns