

Dear Secretary,

We are 'baby boomers' double income no kids, we are labor/green voters, we are aware of environmental issues, and we have made a lifestyle change for our retirement. In this change we built a home at Mt Nebo in Queensland that is energy efficient. We have solar hot water, we have reticulated grey water, we have a composting toilet, we have effective eaves and shading, we have low energy lighting, we have a worm farm, we only have rain water, and, we were eager to further enhance our sustainability by installing a grid connected solar photovoltaic system.

We did our research and attended various meetings with solar neighbourhood networks in Brisbane and Samford, deciding to accept an offer in Samford Valley in Queensland. This offer was put together by Howard Neilsen and engaged the services of Beyond Building Energy from Byron Bay to conduct inspections and installations of solar systems. The initial cost of \$8500 less rebate meant a cost to me of \$500, and also being an electrician, this offer was too good to refuse. So we drew on our mortgage and paid in full for a 1.5kW solar system. This would nearly complete our dream of being self sufficient and environmentally friendly.

Then, out of the blue, on budget night, the means test was introduced. As such, we strongly objected and sent the Minister a letter of objection which is attached. We received a response which is attached from the Ministers office which we found slightly offensive as it did not address the reasons why the means test was introduced and promptly provided another (quite terse) response, also attached. Copies of all documents have been forwarded to our Federal, State and Local government members.

Regretfully, we have now withdrawn from the Samford neighbourhood network as the investment at \$8500 cannot be returned over the life of the system, i.e. it is not cost effective. In light of the recent Garnaut draft report it appears the Rudd government has ignored an effective way of encouraging hard working people to make a contribution to reducing the carbon footprint in this country. We don't particularly care about providing excess electricity to the grid ( it would be nice but again the initial cost is too high) but if we can become closer to neutral, i.e. produce what we use, then we believe we have made an effective contribution.

We urge this inquiry to

1. support people who have signed a contract to purchase a rebateable solar panel prior to midnight on 13 May and enable them to continue with the purchase and be eligible to apply for a full rebate within a three month period.
2. seek to lift the means test income value to \$150,00 in line with other announced means tests, or
3. seek to reverse the decision to have the solar rebate means tested

Thankyou for the opportunity to provide a submission to this inquiry.

Janette and Andrew Bailey