

To whom it may concern,

My Name is Benjamin Carter based in Parkinson QLD and I would like to express my views on the means testing of the solar rebate introduced by the Rudd Government in this years federal budget.

As a father to two children that is concerned about the environment that we live in, I decided to make a conscious choice to build an environmentally friendly house this year. As part of the build we have incorporated solar hot water, PV cells, rain water harvesting (20,000L), light weight construction, energy efficient lighting, increased specifications on insulation, extended eave's, high efficiency appliances and appropriate orientation of living areas and windows.

To do this, we had to borrow significantly more money from the bank than what we would have had to do if a conventional house was built. To pay for the financing of these options we earn over the 100K threshold otherwise they were not affordable - yet we are not rich - in my opinion we are a working family with dual incomes.

The decision to means test the Solar rebate(s) and energy/ water efficiency rebates introduced by the Howard Government has meant that I have now had to scale these features in my house back. I can no longer afford to install a 3kW PV system and will now cut it back to 1kW.

This decision directly affects the contractors that are performing the work for me and based on their stories I feel for them. Additionally the decision will mean less systems installed, hence less contractors making a living from installing PV systems and water / energy efficiency measures, hence less competition, hence higher prices for those working families that do earn under 100K that can somehow afford to install a system. This is crazy - Rudd and Garret have sold out on the Australian people in my opinion.

The QLD governments bulk purchasing arrangement for their program illustrates this point perfectly. I wonder how many people earning over 100K have now rejected their successful applications to this program.

If this Labour government was serious about solar power and climate change - they would not have taxed working class families like mine that earn over 100K per year. If anything - I would have thought that the Government would have encouraged people to invest more of their money in solar energy and our long term environment.

It is the way of the future and Australia has a real chance to become world leaders - that is if the Senate enquiry can help to turn this decision around.

As a labour voter in the 2007 election for the first time, I feel like I have been "scammed" by the Rudd Labour federal government as their election promises seemed to indicate that they would do all they can to reduce Greenhouse emissions. This decision does not meet this promise.

Revive the solar industry and re-instate the solar rebate for income earners over 100K. It is still a significant investment for many people in this bracket and one that the government should still contribute to.

How does Toyota get 35M- a global car giant - and a working class family like mine - nothing

Something is wrong here!

Thanks for your time in consideration - I would be more than keen to attend any information nights in Brisbane.

Regards

Benjamin Carter