

I wish to put in a submission to outline my support for the Private Senator's Bill the *Save Our Solar (Solar Rebate Protection) Bill 2008 [No 2]*. Our household was one of the many households affected by the Government decision to means test the solar rebate scheme and who chose to cancel our order for solar panels following the decision.

I understand that the Bill is intended to improve the operation of the Solar Homes and Communities Plans under which rebates are payable in respect of the installation of solar systems.

I am of the view that this Bill would indeed improve the scheme by improving the accountability of the government decision making relating to the solar rebate scheme. It does this by requiring the Minister to make guidelines relating to matters such as eligibility for the scheme and types of systems which would be covered.

The Bill provides that such guidelines would be a legislative instrument. In my view the benefits of this requirement are that:

- the guidelines would be disallowable – this would ensure that the guidelines are subject to parliamentary scrutiny and subject to disallowance. Given the very real and urgent challenge facing society as a result of climate change this would ensure that important government decisions attempting to address climate change are subject to appropriate scrutiny;
- consultation under the *Legislative Instruments Act 2003* would occur. This would ensure that appropriate industry and affected stakeholders would be consulted prior to any guidelines being made.

I understand that the proposed Bill will not of itself have the effect of changing the eligibility requirements under current plan. However, I have attached for your information and to be considered part of my submission, a copy of a letter I sent to the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts following the Government's decision to change the current rebate scheme. This letter outlines concerns I had regarding the decision and suggested possible alternatives if the Government did not reconsider its decision.

Please do not hesitate to contact me (contact details below) if you wish to discuss this submission further.

Your sincerely
Kirsten Miller