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Committee Secretary  
Senate Standing Committee on Economics  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600  
Australia

To the Committee Secretary

Re – Legislation of the Solar Credits Scheme

RF Industries Pty Ltd (RFI) has been distributing solar power products since 1981 and has experienced the slow and steady growth of the solar power industry over these years. The previous two years have seen a dramatic step change in demand for solar grid connected power systems, driven largely by the PVRP and SHCP rebate schemes from successive governments. This in turn has seen job creation, a far more competitive landscape and a greater level of consumer choice.

We currently find ourselves in a political stalemate with neither a government rebate scheme available for grid connection (SHCP) nor regional (RRPGP) standalone solar power. The proposed Solar Credits Scheme now sits in the hands of those responsible for debating a much larger series of topics including the revised Renewable Energy Target (RET).

As the largest wholesale distributor of solar PV equipment in Australia, our interests include those of the dealers and installers who purchase products from us as well as our own staff.

In terms of the current RET legislation under review and the Solar Credits Scheme contained within this legislation, as a company committed to this industry we would like to make the following supportive comments.

1. The delay in the approval of the “Solar Credits Scheme” legislation within the RET legislation is creating a significant amount of uncertainty at a time when finally a maturation of renewable energy experience, talent, staffing levels and commercial commitments was being seen in our market. This is truly a national problem in terms of the slow down of retail enquiries, the direct impact to all dealers, installers and retailers of solar power products. The lack of a “Smooth Transition” from SHCP to the Solar Credits Scheme has negatively impacted many businesses if not all businesses within the Solar PV sector. Many installer and sales roles are currently being laid off or being reconsidered. The momentum gained over the previous six months is being rapidly eradicated. We request

you pass this legislation at the next sitting of parliament to secure the industry, resources and skills that are currently battling to stay in business.

2. We recommend you consider lifting the current 1.5Kw cap on the 5 x Multiplier to 10Kw to encourage a broader and deeper take up of the technology. This in turn will deliver greater movement early towards the 45,000Gw RET with take up being seen by not just the residential but also small commercial sector.
3. Finally, with almost 30 years of experience directly within the Solar PV industry, RFI believe that the implementation of a Gross National Feed-in Tariff (FIT) is the natural and required market stimulation model to provide certainty, value and benefits to all parties within the renewable energy sector. This is a proven and well known model internationally and one which has been described in detail to government and proven to provide the positive benefits of renewable energy over the short to medium term. The Gross FIT has turned several European countries into world leaders in the field of Renewable Energy and we believe the time has come for Australia to adopt this initiative as a significant tool in the drive for greater adoption of renewable energy in our country.

Yours sincerely



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