

Patsy Lisle

## **Support solar power**

11/1/16

To the Essential Services Commission - Inquiry into the true value of Distributed Generation to Victorian Consumers

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to a discussion about the value of distributed generation of energy.

I am surprised that such a question should require yet further review. The need to support renewable energy should be completely obvious by now. The dangers already experienced due to climate change should be enough to confirm to governments the urgency of moving away from fossil fuels. The fact that this point still needs to be made is evidence, in my view, of the corrupting influence coal mining and other fossil fuel companies have on governments.

I want to add my voice to calls for greater support for renewable energy development. In particular, I believe that a fair feed-in tariff is required. There is no way that power companies should be able to justify buying power for less than the price they will sell it on. We should have, at the minimum, what the Greens are calling a 1:1 unit price – people contributing power to the grid should get the same price as the electricity companies charge for it.

It is remarkable that only recently, an Australian Prime Minister said that coal is good for us. If governments continue to move so slowly on support for renewables, we are not only contributing to ongoing climate change, but endangering future employment options. It looks like Australia is going to keep subsidising dying industries like coal, rather than helping to develop the new industries and the jobs they will bring. It feels like the 'clever country' is slipping further and further backwards. Both political parties seem intent on not just dragging their feet, but trying to undo the good that has already been achieved through popular support for renewable energy. Lowering the feed-in tariff is just one example of this destructive intention.

I call on the Essential Services Commission to immediately recommend to the Victorian State Government that a fair feed in tariff for solar energy be set as soon as possible. A fair tariff would be at least the market value per kilowatt hour that the energy companies will charge when they sell that energy on.