

Deb Foskey MLA

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Generous rebates one side of the energy equation

Deb Foskey, Greens MLA, today said that the rebate the ACT Government is offering to pay people who feed solar power into the grid is a generous one.

"There is no doubt that the offer of 3.88 times the average standard rate will encourage many house owners to install solar panels on their roofs" said Dr Foskey.

"This, in turn, will increase the viability of solar technology as the most appropriate form of renewable energy currently available to the ACT."

"The proposal for solar feed-in laws is the big ticket item in the ACT Government's long overdue Climate Change Strategy."

"Retrofitting public housing is the Strategy's other major measure which will make a real difference, as reducing energy use is the single most effective way we can reduce our carbon emissions."

"For this reason, I would like to have seen more in the strategy to encourage people to insulate their homes because this would decrease the need for heating and air conditioning, which are the biggest items in power bills, and the biggest drivers of increased demand."

"Under this scheme, all consumers will pay a surcharge to cover the cost of higher tariffs to solar power providers. The risk is that it will increase our subsidy of the air conditioning of inefficient buildings. Private renters in particular could end up carrying the cost and missing out on the benefits of cheaper renewable energy"

"There will be other things to work out as well, such as whether people signed up to Green Power, who already pay more, will have their surcharge waived, and how we encourage private landlords to participate in the program, along with home owners."

"By focussing on increasing supply the Government might miss the huge potential for proactive reduction of demand – such as that offered by Senator Milne's EASI scheme (Energy Efficiency Access and Savings Initiative) and Professor Blaker's *Solarisation* proposal."

"I would like to see a benefit cost comparison of this stand alone feed in rebate initiative against these demand reduction initiatives" said Dr Foskey.

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