

My submission supports the Australian Local Power Agency Bill 2021.

Climate events around the world over the past year show that our system of creating electricity would be much better off if there were more local energy systems to support regional and remote communities, and even suburban communities which are dependent on distant power sources.

I give as examples, the fires on the East coast of Australia at the end of 2019 and the beginning of 2020, the 2020 and 2021 floods in Victoria and Queensland, sudden and violent storms in almost every state causing damage to infrastructure but particularly in mid NSW and the knowledge that, as global heat increases these will only get worse and not better.

Local energy sources would make it much easier to put infrastructure linking systems underground, and provide the opportunity to have local teams of energy workers to restore power when required – faster and with local knowledge.

This Bill provides the opportunity to set up systems to support community development, provide an underwriting scheme to give greater financial certainty and to offer communities an opportunity to invest in larger schemes where they are near population areas. It is important to note that the Bill also allows for liaison at all times between these projects and ARENA and the CEFC.

The Bill also allows for the sharing of knowledge, resources and information to assist community energy projects to start up.

It has my full support.

Dr Helen Hutchinson (PhD)

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