

Australian Greens' Additional Comments

The Greens believe that the Bill should be passed during the current sitting fortnight but that it could be improved.

These additional comments respond only to the Committee's report. Further detail about the Greens position on the Bill and general criticism of the Government's lack of support for the renewable energy sector will be included in my second reading speech.

1) Banked Renewable Energy Certificates

The Committee dismisses industry concerns about the level of banked Renewable Energy Certificates and instead relies solely on the Department's commissioned modelling (conducted by MMA) to form the conclusion that banked RECs will not unduly crowd out investment in the near term. The Greens believe that this is a risky conclusion, especially given the Department's poor record in forecasting the industry's growth and REC prices. It also demonstrates that the Government would not be overly concerned by further delays in investment in renewables.

The Greens will endeavour to move an amendment to mitigate this risk.

2) Overheating the SRES market

The Greens welcome the Committee's concern that the SRES market may overheat if the cost of installing PV systems falls too low, but we are disappointed that the committee had no specific recommendation as to how to rectify this problem. Again, the Greens will move an amendment to address this concern.

3) Emission intensive trade exposed industries

The Greens do not support the partial exemptions provided to the emission intensive trade exposed industries because a) many other nations have similar (often stronger) renewable energy support policies, yet virtually none provide any exemptions to their EITE's and b) even with the cost of the RET, Australian electricity prices will remain very competitive.

Senator Christine Milne

