

19 May 2008

The Hon Peter Garrett AM MP
Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Garrett

My number one reason for voting for the Australian Labour Party at the last election was climate change.

I've never written to a politician before but I believe so strongly that we need to take action on this issue now that I must tell you how angry and frustrated I am with the Government's decision to means test the solar rebate.

This decision clearly indicates that the Government is not focussed on actually reducing emissions through measures such as renewable energy, but rather is focussed on superficial politics.

You have disempowered the people who are most likely to move first in our community and show the way for others. Your claim that the Government is ensuring that the solar rebates go to those that need them most is an utter nonsense. Even with the rebate a 1 kW system will cost an additional \$4,000 - \$6,000. We all know that households with an income of less than \$100,000 are the least likely to be able to afford this, particularly with rising interest rates and fuel costs.

Emissions impact aside, I understand enough about electricity prices and the lack of generating capacity to know that solar power on homes will help reduce the likelihood/frequency of blackouts and keep electricity prices down. This benefits everyone whether they have solar panels or not.

This rebate should be about the environment and not how much people earn. Its sole aim should be to ensure that those people who are in a position to install solar panels do it.

At the United Nations climate change conference in Bali Mr Rudd said that "Australia now stood ready to assume its responsibility in responding to the challenge of climate change – both at home and in the negotiations that lie ahead across the community and nations". I signed up for solar panels, completed a rebate application and paid a deposit on 14 April. Submission of my application was dependant on a building inspection which was done last week. I enclose my completed application (original is with the supplier) and request that you honour the commitments given by Mr Rudd in Bali by approving it.

Yours sincerely

Jenny Issell

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