The Hon Lily D’Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change   
Minister for Solar Homes

The Hon Robin Scott MP

Assistant Treasurer

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# CREATING JOBS AND DRIVING DOWN ENERGY PRICES

The Andrews Labor Government is putting Victorians back in control of their power bills through its ground-breaking investment in rooftop solar and new powers to crackdown on energy retailers that rip people off.

The *Victorian Budget 2019/20* invests $1.3 billion to roll out the next phase of the *Solar Homes* Package. From 1 July, rebates will be available for solar panels, hot water systems, batteries and zero-interest loans so Victorian households can install half price solar with no up-front costs.

As promised at the election, the scheme will be expanded to include renters – ensuring Victorians have access to cheaper, more reliable power whether they own or rent their home.

The 10-year *Solar Homes* program is boosting energy supply, driving down power bills and creating a huge pipeline of work for the industry in Victoria – supporting jobs across the state.

The Budget also includes $27.27 million to ensure that energy companies who try to rip off customers face the consequences, as part of one of the biggest shake ups of energy regulation seen in Victoria for decades.

As promised, the Essential Services Commission will get an extra Commissioner – an energy cop on the beat – who will be tasked with prosecuting misbehaving energy retailers who’ve been able to get away with rogue practices for too long.

Alongside implementing an energy default offer, which will cut the cost of power for households, the Labor Government’s *Energy Fairness Plan* will double civil penalty notices to $250,000 for retailers who undertake wrongful disconnections – making it the highest fine of its type in the nation.

Criminal penalties are also being upped to $1 million for energy retailers who mislead or deceive customers, or systematically and wrongfully disconnect households.

The *Energy Fairness Plan* also gives the Commission clearer investigatory powers, as well as new powers to monitor and report on the Victorian retail energy market and crack down on retailers doing the wrong thing.

The Commission will take action if retailers ignore our ban on ‘win-backs’ – so-called short-term discounts that end up costing customers more in the long run.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment, Climate Change and Solar Homes Lily D’Ambrosio

“We promised to put power back in the hands of Victorians and get them a fairer deal on power prices – that’s what we are doing.”

“Our landmark Solar Homes program is boosting supply, driving down energy prices and creating thousands of jobs – it’s an investment in the future of our economy and our work to tackle climate change.”

Quote attributable to Assistant Treasurer Robin Scott

“We’re making the rules fairer for energy consumers and putting a tough cop on the beat to crackdown on companies that do the wrong thing.”