

Media Release

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Energy partnership to tackle threshold issue of energy affordability

Energy Consumers Australia welcomes the work undertaken by Energy Ministers in developing a new National Energy Transformation Partnership and supports the vision to deliver the greatest benefits for Australian households, businesses and communities.

The Partnership provides a national approach to the energy transition, outlining joint actions to support more efficient investment and planning. These actions are intended to ensure a secure and reliable supply of energy as the market transitions to a net-zero future. Combining this long-term approach with immediate actions to bring down consumer bills will help to deliver a better energy future for all households and small businesses.

CEO Lynne Gallagher said after such a constructive discussion “we look forward to working with ministers on actions which can bring bills down even though prices are going up”.

“The new Partnership Agreement provides a scaffold for new policies and actions that enable consumers to participate, lower their energy use, and bills,” Ms Gallagher said.

“We now need a concerted effort by governments and industry to put downward pressure on prices and provide consumers with opportunities to manage their energy use to lower their bills.

“Bringing down bills needs urgent action and we look forward to working with governments on the implementation of the plan and work program to do this.”

Ms Gallagher said a key focus for Energy Consumers Australia in tackling energy affordability, will be to capture the opportunity to work with consumers to lower bills.

“This requires attention to energy efficiency measures, capitalising on the opportunity of consumer energy resources including taking advantage of cheaper energy produced by solar, and other demand response opportunities.

“We will be identifying existing actions, as well as new opportunities over the short to medium term, to ensure all households and businesses can participate to manage their energy bills. Consumers want to see us come together and move to a clean energy future and they see energy affordability as the single most important issue to address in the transition.”

“Our latest Energy Consumer Sentiment Survey found that nearly two thirds of households think that having affordable energy prices for all Australians is the biggest challenge ahead for the energy system.

Ms Gallagher said energy affordability affects everyone, but there is also a concerning and growing energy divide. “Our research also shows energy costs account for up to 12 per cent of household income for those on the lowest incomes - more than four times the national average.

“Energy affordability impacts consumer trust and confidence in energy institutions and companies. We need consumer confidence to increase, to open the door for many of the market reforms outlined in the Partnership, which are critical to the energy transition, including those which rely on consumer participation and consent to change.”

About Energy Consumers Australia

Energy Consumers Australia is the independent, national voice for residential and small business energy consumers. We enable residential and small business energy consumers to have their voices

heard by the sector by working with other consumer groups to gather evidence-based research with a national perspective, distil it to key viewpoints, and feed it back to the market to influence outcomes.

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