

Media Statement

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Federal Budget measures to take the edge off household and small business energy bill shock

Energy Consumers Australia has welcomed measures in today's Federal Budget to ease short term cost-of-living pressures, while investing to address the long-term energy affordability challenges.

The Energy Bill Relief Fund package will be applied directly to bills as credits to eligible households, including those on income support or pensions, and to small businesses.

Energy Consumers Australia CEO Lynne Gallagher said the package would help to protect households and small businesses from excessive bill shock while larger reforms to drive down prices are delivered.

"Over the next two years, up to \$500 in direct assistance will provide welcome relief for millions of Australian households and \$650 for small businesses that have come under increasing financial pressure," Ms Gallagher said.

"It will see more than 5.5 million households eligible for some assistance with their electricity bills, in addition to around a million small businesses.

"As well as this direct assistance, we welcome the investments to support consumers to control their energy use which will help drive down bills.

"These include new investment in the Clean Energy Finance Corporation, social housing and small business energy incentives to support electrification and more efficient use of energy.

Ms Gallagher said this package of measures would help offset rising energy prices of between 25-30 per cent expected this year.

"The recent price increases come on top of double-digit increases the previous year and will certainly be felt by consumers who we know are already struggling with multiple cost-of living and cost of business pressures.

"The Federal Budget combines much needed immediate direct assistance with investments that help consumers get control of their energy costs.

"This budget tackles prices while recognising the importance of supporting consumers with their energy use and that is the combination we were looking for."

Ms Gallagher welcomed initiatives to give people better information about their home's energy rating.

"Helping people reduce their bills starts at home because the average energy rating is just 1.7 stars. Expanding the house energy rating scheme to existing homes will make people more informed and help incentivise energy efficiency upgrades for owners."

Ms Gallagher also welcomed the adjustments to the petroleum resource rent taxation of the gas industry, "which are modest and long overdue."

"Consumers want to see governments act on delivering a clean energy future with those benefits flowing through to consumers.

“Australia’s successful energy transition will only take place if consumers are appropriately supported to be a part of the process.”

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.

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