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MEDIA RELEASE

IMPROVING ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF RENTAL PROPERTIES – SENATE REPORT ON BILL PRESENTED BY SENATOR TIM STORER

6 February 2019

I am pleased that the Committee “supports the broad aims of the bill” and acknowledges that “improved energy efficiency will result in lower energy bills and improved health and wellbeing of tenants”.

The Committee should also be congratulated for acknowledging that there are “serious inadequacies of the energy efficiency of rental properties”.

The bill successfully raised awareness of the considerable benefits energy efficiency could bring to the everyday lives of Australians who rent, and generated debate on how to ramp-up and improve Australia’s energy efficiency investment more generally through a national energy efficiency strategy and national energy efficiency target.

Submissions provide clear evidence that energy efficiency cuts energy bills, reduces demand on the grid and reduces carbon emissions.

It is disappointing that, despite that positive agreement, overwhelming evidence as well the modest, conservative cost estimated by the Parliamentary Budget Office at \$21-29 million, the conclusion of the Coalition and Labor was to not support the bill.

Submissions to the inquiry noted points that would need to be fleshed out before implementing the bill. My dissenting report highlights that resulting amendments to the bill are straightforward and minor.

It is important to note what the recommendation of the report - that the bill not be passed - will mean for those who would have otherwise been helped by the bill.

People who rent are more vulnerable to extremes in temperature, which will only become more frequent with climate change. These effects are real and ongoing, as we saw in Adelaide, for example, in late January, where extreme heat resulted in more than 220 South Australians being treated by paramedics.

I strongly encourage both the Coalition and Labor to demonstrate leadership by backing the evidence and commit to substantial energy efficiency investment.

I look forward to the major parties detailing their commitments on a national energy efficiency strategy and target so voters can be confident the next government will act to fill this serious gap in policy.

Report -

https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Environment_and_Communications/TreasuryLawsBill/Report

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