Submission 1

Energy network companies are required to demonstrate an actual need for solar export charges but have failed to do so.

There are a number of low-cost technology alternatives to solar export charges to address grid issues that have not been adequately considered.

In a cost-of-living crisis, we should be encouraging the supply of more cheap solar into the grid, not penalising it.

Households face export charges of up to 3.6c/kwh (depending on their local network provider), which change the economics of solar installed by households in good faith.

Federal Energy Minister Chris Bowen has stated 60 million new solar installations are required in the next seven years to meet the Government's climate goals.

The benefits of solar export charges for non-solar households are trivial – as little as $1 per year.

Submission 2

In a cost-of-living crisis, we should be encouraging the supply of more cheap solar into the grid, not penalising it. It would be a regressive step if network companies charge New South Wales solar owners for exporting their cheap solar energy to the grid. Penalising solar homes that are doing their bit to bring down their bills and emissions in a cost-of-living crisis is a backwards move – and it puts our supply of cheap clean energy at risk. Please do not allow this.

Submission 3

Some better ways to address the issue might be:

1) Smart Grid Technology: Smart grid technology can help manage the flow of electricity between the grid and solar installations. By using sensors and automated control systems, the grid can dynamically adjust to fluctuations in solar power production, ensuring that excess power is used efficiently and effectively.

2) Battery Storage: Battery storage systems can be used to store excess solar power and release it back into the grid when needed. This can help to smooth out fluctuations in solar power production and reduce the need for expensive upgrades to the grid.

3) Virtual Power Plants: Virtual power plants (VPPs) are networks of decentralized power sources, such as solar installations, that can be aggregated and managed as a single entity. VPPs can help to improve the efficiency of the grid by providing a more flexible and responsive source of power.

4) Time-of-Use Pricing: Time-of-use pricing can be used to encourage solar power producers to send their excess power back to the grid during times of peak demand, when it is most valuable. By offering higher prices for power sent back to the grid during these times, solar power producers can be incentivised to help stabilise the grid and reduce the need for expensive peak power generation.

More thinking outside the box is required by energy companies, not discouraging the progress of rooftop solar such as this policy

Submission 4

Charging for exported energy from DER is not necessary if dynamic export limiting is enabled, such as SAPN is rolling out in South Australia. This ensures DER cannot export at levels and times that cause network congestion. With networks managing DER exports, there is no need for a charge or penalty for consumers, with the benefit of higher levels of DER saturation, renewal energy in the wider networks, and greater emission reduction. We have the technology, which supersedes any need for export charges.

Submission 5

I am a pensioner and have recently bought a solar system to reduce my long-term energy costs and do my bit to help cut emissions in the face of increasingly alarming climate change. It will be years before my system pays for itself at the current rate of rebate. To now penalise people such as myself by charging me for making a contribution to reduce emissions is outrageous and grossly unfair. Not to mention a massive deterrent for people to buy solar in the future. Charging people for a resource that is free is nothing less than exploitation and especially at a time when living costs are rising on a daily basis. Please reconsider this counter-productive proposal.

Submission 6

My understanding is that using renewable energy from rooftop solar reduces emissions, and that to achieve the Government's climate goals, we need to transition from electricity produced by coal fired power stations to electricity produced from renewable sources. People have rooftop solar for two main reasons: contributing to emissions reduction and reducing their electricity bills. Why then would energy network companies start charging households an export fee - something that would discourage households from contributing to the Government mandated transition. Surely the energy network companies should be doing everything they can, including upgrading the grid, to fully utilise the electricity from rooftop solar coming into the grid, because as the transition progresses, we will be needing every kilowatt we can get from renewables. It seems counter-productive to penalise households for grid inefficiencies that have not been addressed by the energy network companies. It is also misleading to electricity consumers, who would have calculated the economics of rooftop solar before going ahead with their installation, and that calculation would not have included export charges.

Submission 7

We should be encouraging, not discouraging, the uptake of renewable energy. It is pivotal in providing a sustainable future and reducing the cost of electricity. Roof-top solar is a fantastic way for the regular household to take charge of the situation and reduce their electricity bills as well as helping to build a sustainable future for their children. It's an easy, simple way to get private investment in the necessary solar installations to meet the Government's climate goals. Adding this proposed export charge will diminish the uptake of household solar