Clean Energy Future bill an historic opportunity

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Australia's peak welfare and community sector bodies have welcomed the passage of the Clean Energy Future bill through the House of Representatives in Federal Parliament today as an historic opportunity to build a low-carbon future for all Australians. 'We congratulate the Parliament for passing this important legislation and we can now begin the crucial task of transforming our economy,' said Dr Cassandra Goldie, CEO of the Australian Council of Social Service.

'As the peak body for welfare groups and community organisations we know that people who live in vulnerable situations and on low incomes will be affected first and worst by climate change. Effective and equitable action is vital to reduce carbon pollution and we are keen to work with all parties to help build a community consensus around the solutions. That is why we support the bill and have campaigned hard for the householder assistance package it contains which we believe will help vulnerable people meet any price rises that flow on to consumers.'

The passage of the federal legislation now gives an opportunity for the states and territories to ensure that they are prepared for the economic changes that are going to happen. 'Our changing climate is having real impacts on real people and acting now provides the best chance for protecting our food production and the regional communities that are most at risk,' said Cath Smith, Chief Executive Officer of the Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS).

'A market mechanism which delivers fairness and protects Australians and their families is the best way forward and is an historic opportunity to act in the nation's best interest. Households most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change tend to be those already experiencing the most disadvantage, especially in regional WA,' said Irina Cattalini, Chief Executive Officer of the West Australian Council of Social Service (WACOSS).

'That's why it's important we act now, and that we assist families through the transition to a cleaner economy.'

Signatories

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