



## MEDIA RELEASE

# Solar Communities Program grants available

12 Mar 2019

Member for New England, Barnaby Joyce, said rural and regional community organisations will get help to reduce their power bills through the Coalition Government's \$5 million Solar Communities program which is part of new Energy Efficient Communities Program.

A \$5 million Solar Communities programme support grants of up to \$12,500 for eligible community organisations to apply for funding for small-scale solar energy generation and storage projects.

Mr Joyce said the Coalition Government understood community groups were struggling under the weight of energy bills, particularly in the New England.

"What we need is the right balance of energy generation in this country, a mix of the old and new, and part of that includes renewables like solar," Mr Joyce said.

"That way we are looking after the environment while delivering fairer energy prices for people in the New England.

"These grants are part of our Government's \$3.5 billion Climate Solutions Package, which will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and ensure we meet our 2030 Climate Commitments.

"Our Government's policies will create jobs, not destroy whole sectors of the economy or push up power prices, like Labor's reckless targets will do."

A wide range of organisations that work hard to support our community will be eligible to apply for the Solar Communities program. Examples include community-owned kindergartens, welfare centres, Men's Sheds, community centres, women's associations, country fire authorities, community-owned child care centres, community football and netball clubs, Scout or Guide groups, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community groups.

Community groups seeking consideration in the Solar Communities program should request an expression of interest form from Mr Joyce's electorate office and submit as soon as possible.

Through the Energy Efficient Communities Program, eligible small businesses will also be able to claim grants of up to \$20,000, high-energy using businesses up to \$25,000.

The Coalition Government remains committed to ensuring customers remain at the centre of its energy policy. Promoting efficient energy usage is an important part of this plan.

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Hon **Barnaby Joyce** MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR NEW ENGLAND

(ENDS)

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