

## Submission to the Victorian government community consultation

15 July 2021

I would like to start by congratulating the Victorian government's \$1.6 billion budget allocation for a clean energy transition and commitment to gas substitution. However, I am asking for more rapid action to set strong targets and reduce gas use immediately. This is a critical time for energy decision making in Victoria. I am proud to know that Victoria is the only place in the world where fracking is banned in the Constitution and I sincerely hope that it will remain that way.

In line with recent reports, the Victorian Gas Market - Demand Side Measures to Avoid Forecast Supply Shortfall commissioned by Environment Victoria and the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) that has said that there is no need for new gas in Australia in their March Gas Statement of Opportunities report.

I suggest, along with many others, that the Victorian government should include in the Gas Substitution Roadmap sustainable alternatives and pathways for the gas sector to transition to net zero emissions with consideration of the following:

- Short term targets for reduction in Victorian gas use, with a minimum 35% reduction by 2025 and 60% reduction by 2030
- Implementation of key measures which have been identified by experts as reducing gas use most quickly such as incentives and planning measures to facilitate:
  - Replacement of ducted gas heating
  - Installing heat pump hot water
  - Switching to heat pump space heating in commercial buildings
  - Immediate planning law changes to prohibit gas to new buildings
  - Best practice efficiency standards to reduce energy demand
  - Prioritising solar thermal technology research and development for high process heat requirements and renewable energy and batteries for electrification
- Ensure that strong support is provided for low income and vulnerable Victorians to shift to cheaper, less polluting alternatives than gas.

Victoria has the highest household gas use in the country, half of which is in space heating. We need visionary leadership from the State Government to set an ambitious timetable to accelerate this switch and support clean renewable energy, not polluting gas. Our future and that of our children and grandchildren is dependent on the actions of governments now, not tomorrow when it will be too late.

Regards