

LETTER TO THE EDITOR, HERALD SUN

Thursday 9th August 2012

Yes, we need a reliable supply of energy so that vulnerable members of our community are not put at risk of freezing during winter or overheating during summer (Andrew Bolt 'How many must die?'). However, the Prime Minister has correctly identified the problem of costs which have become a big problem for many members of the community in recent years. We need a reliable energy supply, but also one that is affordable in the first place. Supply charges have risen, on average, from \$46.89 per quarter in 2008 to \$86.65 today. Even if you don't use a lot of electricity you will pay the same supply charge as your neighbour who does. This is particularly tough on low income households and pensioners.

Supply charges are important for electricity reliability as they fund the expansion and maintenance of energy infrastructure. But the burden of this is unfairly placed on the shoulders of those least able to afford it and who use it less. We need to find smarter and fairer ways of lowering energy use during peak times. This will reduce pressure on the capacity of the electricity system and the need for upgrades which have been driving up electricity costs. Any efforts to address this issue by the Federal and state governments, as well as energy regulators, should be encouraged.

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