ENERGY ROADMAP AMENDMENT BILL 2025

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Governance, Energy and Finance Committee
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Subject: Response to the Governance, Energy and Finance Committee: Energy Roadmap Amendment Bill 2025 Inquiry

The Clean Energy Council (CEC) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Governance, Energy and Finance Committee: Energy Roadmap Amendment Bill 2025 Inquiry.

The CEC is the peak body for the clean energy industry in Australia, representing nearly 1,000 of the leading businesses operating in renewable energy, energy storage, and renewable hydrogen. The CEC is committed to accelerating the decarbonisation of Australia's energy system maintaining a secure and reliable supply of electricity for customers.

The Clean Energy Australia 2025 report shows that CEC members recorded significant progress in large-scale renewable energy development, with projects reaching financial commitment representing a total investment of approximately $2.05b and delivering 1.05 GW of new generation capacity[1]. This level of investment demonstrates strong confidence in Queensland's clean energy sector and highlights the state's growing contribution to Australia's renewable energy transition through large-scale solar and wind developments.

Over the past decade, Queensland has seen substantial investment in renewable energy, reflecting the state's strong transition toward a clean energy future. According to Australian Bureau of Statistics data on renewable energy construction, from 2016-17 to 2023-24, Queensland attracted approximately $9.9 billion in investment in large-scale renewable generation projects, including solar, wind, and associated infrastructure. This investment has underpinned the deployment of over 10 GW of installed renewable capacity[2], positioning Queensland as a national leader in renewable energy development. These investments have not only expanded the state's clean energy generation but also laid the foundation for future storage projects and distributed generation, contributing to energy security, job creation, and decarbonisation targets.

[1] See page 8, clean-energy-australia-report-2025
[2] Value of renewable energy construction, June 2024 | Australian Bureau of Statistics

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We acknowledge the release of the Queensland Energy Roadmap and for outlining the Government's strategic direction for the state's energy future. We support the intent to deliver affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy, and welcome the investment in regional infrastructure, skills development, and community-level storage.

The CEC is deeply concerned by the decision to remove Queensland's renewable energy targets and delay the planned exit of coal-fired generation from the generation mix. These changes represent a significant change of direction from Queensland's previous direction towards the energy transition and risks undermining both investor confidence and the state's contribution to national decarbonisation goals.

The roadmap's commitment to 6.8 GW of new renewable capacity by 2030 is a reiteration of existing private sector plans, many of which are already underwritten by the Federal Government's Capacity Investment Scheme. Beyond 2030, the pace of renewable development is expected to slow considerably, with only 4.4 GW expected between 2030 and 2035. Our assessment of this deployment pace will be inconsistent with the scale required to meet net zero by 2050 and leaves Queensland lagging behind other states in renewable penetration.

The decision to extend the life of coal-fired generation to at least 2046, and potentially into the 2050s, is particularly disappointing. While we understand the need for system reliability and economic pragmatism, this approach risks further emissions and delaying the deployment of cleaner, more flexible technologies. The roadmap's forecast of up to 8 GW of gas-fired generation by 2035 further undermines the sustainability of coal fired power stations in the energy mix where flexible generation will impact upon the economics of these assets.

Global investment in clean energy is reaching historic heights, putting regions that are slow to act at risk of missing out on a substantial share of this growth. According to International Energy Agency (IEA), global energy investment is projected to hit US $3.3 trillion in 2025, with around US $2.2 trillion directed to clean energy technologies, including renewables, grids, storage and low-emissions fuels[3]. Despite this surge, investment is unevenly distributed, with major economies capturing the lion's share and regions require clear policy signals or infrastructure readiness likely to lose out. For Queensland, this means that unless local policy, planning and grid readiness keep pace with the global investment wave, the state may forfeit significant opportunities in new project development, supply-chain jobs, and broader regional economic growth that comes with hosting large-scale clean energy investments.

Regional economic benefits

A slowdown in clean energy investment can also undermine regional economic outcomes in Queensland. According to the report CEC's "Billions in the Bush: Renewable Energy for Regional Prosperity"[4], regional Queensland stands to receive landholder payments of A$220 to 274 million by 2030, A$1.2 to 1.6 billion by 2040 and A$2.6 to 3.3 billion by 2050 if large-scale solar and wind projects proceed as projected. Equally important are community contributions, including benefit-sharing agreements, local council payments and community funds, which in Queensland are estimated to total A$36 million by 2030, A$206 million by 2040 and A$413 million by 2050. Should investment stall, those procurement contracts, local jobs during construction and operation phases, community benefit agreements and rates paid to regional councils and towns will be lost or delayed. Consequently, this would have material consequences for local employment, business opportunities and council revenues in regional Queensland.

The secondary impacts of an investment slowdown would be even broader. Reduced local spending by workers and contractors, weakened demand for regional goods and services, and diminished council revenues that support community infrastructure and essential services. In effect, a loss of clean

[3] IEA Report: 2025 Clean Energy Investment to Reach US$2.2tn | Sustainability Magazine
[4] billions-in-the-bush-november-2024-final-compressed.pdf

energy investment would reverberate through regional Queensland's economies, eroding business confidence, employment growth and long-term community resilience.

National Emissions and Queensland's Role

Queensland's energy sector contributes significantly to Australia's overall carbon emissions. A slower decarbonisation trajectory in Queensland challenges the nation's ability to meet its 2030 and 2035 climate targets. With 32% of Queensland's electricity currently sourced from renewables, below the national average of 42%, there is a pressing need for the state to keep pace with its peers.

In the absence of Renewable Energy Targets in the Energy Roadmap Amendment Bill, the Emissions Reduction Targets established under the *Clean Economy Jobs Act*[5] stand as the remaining benchmark of Queensland's climate agenda. These targets provide guide for the state's decarbonisation direction. Maintaining these legislated targets is therefore essential to preserving some momentum in emissions reduction, attracting clean investment, and reinforcing Queensland's commitment to national and global climate objectives. Without them, the state risks losing a critical policy anchor necessary to drive new investment in clean energy projects.

Clarity on projects expected to be delivered

The roadmap outlines a five-year plan to guide expected new clean energy generation additions. IT would assist industry if the roadmap was clarified in the event that new renewable generation exceeds the gigawatt amounts currently contained in the roadmap's projections. This would give industry confidence about whether these figures represent a floor or a ceiling for new project development and ensure that viable, well-advanced projects continue to be supported to connect to the grid in a timely and coordinated manner.

System Reliability and Essential Services

We acknowledge the roadmap's recognition of the need for network upgrades and system strength investments. As coal exits the system, maintaining reliability will depend on the deployment of technologies that support essential system services—voltage control, frequency support, and black start capability. Investments in synchronous condensers, grid-forming inverters, and coordinated transmission planning are critical to ensuring a stable and resilient grid.

We also encourage a shift in policy thinking away from traditional notions of "baseload" generation. With the rise of rooftop solar, household and utility-scale storage, and flexible demand, the focus should evolve toward managing minimum system load and ensuring system strength. This transition requires a modernised framework that reflects the realities of a decentralised, variable energy system.

Role of Consumer Energy Resources (CER)

Rooftop solar and home batteries are now well established across Queensland. Over 1.1 million rooftop solar systems have been installed, the highest number of any Australian state. Since July 2025, more than 10,000 home batteries have been installed under the Cheaper Home Batteries Program.

These achievements highlight Queenslanders' strong appetite for renewable energy. While other states have implemented strategies to guide CER integration and uptake, Queensland currently lacks a dedicated, coordinated framework. Establishing a state-based CER Strategy would provide clarity for consumers and industry. Key elements should include:

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[5] See Section 5 of the Act, Clean Economy Jobs Act 2024

- *Virtual Power Plant (VPP) program*: Introduce incentives to encourage household battery owners to participate in VPPs. This would support grid stability, enhance reliability, and reduce energy costs for consumers.
- *Endorse National CER Technical Standards*: Align Queensland's approach with the National Roadmap for CER Integration, ensuring consistency in technical requirements and interoperability across jurisdictions.
- *Harmonise Emergency Solar Backstop Procedures*: Streamline Queensland's emergency solar shutdown process with those of other states to lower compliance costs for industry and improve consumer confidence.
- *Support Targeted CER Programs*: While we note the roadmap outlined funding for the Supercharged Solar for Renters program, there is scope to complement this program with a program to install solar on social housing.

We note that the roadmap is providing $10 million in funding for community-level batteries. This funding is specifically designated to support community-level batteries for greater solar storage and minimum system load management. The roadmap should be more ambitious and consider the establishment of Local Renewable Energy Zones. These zones would encourage private sector investment in solar and battery infrastructure at community and council facilities such as pools, libraries and community centres. These zones can leverage competitive tender program run by an independent body to identify and support projects in strategic local areas with high demand or strong community benefit.

Conclusion

While we welcome aspects of the roadmap—such as regional investment, skills development, and community battery deployment—the change in direction and pace can have consequences for economic opportunities in regional Queensland. The clean energy sector wants to work constructively with government and communities to responsibly and reliably deliver projects that will deliver both economic and climate goals within the state.

The CEC welcomes the roadmap's recognition of the need for transmission upgrades, system strength investments, and regional energy hubs and would support these further paired with a more ambitious clean energy strategy.

The establishment of a new code of conduct for renewable developers and the introduction of the Priority Transmission Investment Framework are positive steps toward improving community engagement and streamlining development. We stand ready to work with the Government to build on these foundations to establish stronger policy signals for investors to assist delivering Queensland's energy transition.

Queensland has a unique opportunity to leverage its leadership in rooftop solar and growing battery uptake to deliver a coordinated, inclusive, and resilient clean energy future. A state-based CER Strategy and the establishment of Local Renewable Energy Zones would ensure continued consumer participation, strengthen the grid, and support Queensland's broader decarbonisation and energy affordability goals.

If you would like to discuss any aspects of our submission, please contact us at [redacted]