



12/11/2021

Re: Small-Scale Green Energy Bill

Thank you for the invitation to respond to the committee.

While the aim of the bill is laudable and I fully support the concept of maximising the role of domestic consumers in the energy transition, I am concerned that there could be unintended consequences if it proceeds in its current form.

Historically, such support schemes have largely favoured homeowners with access to capital, at the expense of less affluent citizens, creating in effect 'middle class subsidies.' Current collaborative work between Ulster University and the NI Housing Executive is seeking to prioritise the role of social housing tenants and lower income households in delivering a net zero energy system.

I would strongly support a refined version of the bill which emphasized the role of lower income households and mitigated the risk of their exclusion. While I fully support the bill's intention of allowing citizens to monetise the value of clean energy, without modification it creates the risk of leaving behind people who are not homeowners, who lack finances or do not feel technically confident enough to take advantage of microgeneration schemes.

I would be happy to discuss this further with either Mr O'Dowd or the committee.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Patrick Keatley

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