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Tasmanian Government **Media Release**

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Guy Barnett, Minister for Energy and Renewables

Re-issued - Protecting Tasmanian consumers and helping to lower power bills

Labor and Dean Winter continue to swap positions on the energy portfolio on a weekly basis and they didn't disappoint on the last day of parliament.

After failing with a flawed electricity price cap, Labor has shifted its attack to our extremely popular \$50 million Energy Saver Loan Scheme while hiding behind parliamentary privilege and criticising the Clean Energy Council of Australia and Brighte Energy.

Already there have been 350 applications (value \$2.9 million) with 282 approved (\$2.35 million), 32 settled and installed (\$250,000) under the Energy Saver Loan Scheme to help make their home or business more energy efficient and lower power bills.

And, to further help Tasmanian businesses we have also agreed to a new \$50 million loan scheme for commercial and industrial customers with energy consumption of over 150 MWh per year so that they can invest in long-term energy efficiency solutions.

Consumer protection is extremely important, especially under a scheme using taxpayer funds, and this needs to be balanced to ensure any additional safeguards are delivering benefits for participants.

Under the Energy Saver Loan Scheme there are requirements for accreditation through both the Clean Energy Council and through Brighte's own code of conduct.

- All solar retailers must be accredited as Approved Solar Retailers by the CEC as demonstrating their commitment to responsible sales and marketing activities and solar industry best practice.
- All solar installers must be accredited by the CEC to ensure quality installations.
- Tasmanians can source quotes from multiple vendors through the Brighte website and compare different offers, ensuring they make the best purchase.

- Solar vendors are not permitted to engage in unsolicited sales (door-to-door) under the terms of the Energy Saver Loan Scheme.
- Tasmanian Businesses are able to sign up to the CEC and its code of conduct and participate in the Scheme.

The Scheme's requirements for CEC accreditation are also consistent with other jurisdictions such as the Australian Capital Territory, South Australia and New South Wales.

The CEC's accreditation program is also approved and overseen by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) which considers that it has resulted in public benefit and increased consumer protection.

We are continuing to discuss the accreditation requirements with the industry and a roundtable has been organised where vendors and representative bodies can raise concerns directly with the CEC, Brighte and the relevant Government department (RECFIT).

In one breath, Labor says it is concerned about Tasmanians being ripped off and then criticises the checks and balances we put in place to protect them.

Labor and Dean Winter have ended the year just how they started – no policies, no plans and changing their position on any topic if they think they can grab a cheap headline and scare Tasmanians.