

A Bill for an Act relating to Improved Sustainability Measures for all Residential Buildings Bill 2020.

To be enacted by the YMCA Victoria Youth Parliament;

## **Improved Sustainability Measures for all Residential Buildings Bill 2020**

A Bill for an Act to extend sustainability requirements for new residential buildings across Victoria. Cumulatively, the new requirements shall work to reduce the States' energy usage, thereby reducing the impact Victoria has on the global climate crisis. The Bill legislates for subsidies for sustainable innovations to ensure sustainable building alternatives are affordable for all homeowners. A solar panel rebate is also outlined alongside compulsory solar panel instalment for all newly constructed dwellings. The formation of a Committee of Sustainable Building Practices will be formed to assist with the regulation of the new practices. This Bill also legislates for the delivery of a marketing scheme for relevant housing industries and the establishment of an education scheme to be implemented in the Year 9 and 10 curriculum to inform young people about the importance of sustainable housing.

The Bill was written with the understanding that systematic improvements to the sustainability of Victorian housing standards would significantly alleviate the environmental impact the sector will have in the coming years. International models of housing development paint a clear picture of how good design can have a significant impact on a building's environmental footprint over its lifespan. In conjunction with the proposed subsidy measures, this act would ultimately serve to lower the cost of living and energy expenditure for Victorians whilst raising the state's standard of living.

## PART I—Preliminary

### Clause 1 Purpose

The main purposes of this Act are—

- (a) to encourage and incentivise sustainable building practises for residential buildings;
- (b) to ensure that the environmental and fiscal benefits of sustainable residential housing are better understood by the Victorian population;
- (c) to facilitate the compulsory installation of solar panels for all new homes across the state of Victoria.

### Clause 2 Commencement

This Bill shall commence upon receiving assent from the Youth Governor of Victoria.

### Clause 3 Definitions

In this Bill, we define the following to mean—

- (a) **subsidy** means a sum of money granted by the state or public body to help an industry or business keep the price of a commodity or service low;
- (b) **rebate** means the payback of a sum of money issued by the government to individuals;
- (c) **NatHERS** means the Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme, a star rating system out of ten that rates the energy efficiency of a home;
- (d) **energy rating** means the rating a house scores in the NatHERS;
- (e) **Australian standards** means documents published by Standards Australia and supported by the Australian Government which set out specifications and procedures designed to ensure that a material, product, method or service is fit for its purpose and consistently performs the way it was intended;
- (f) **SQ** means Sustainability Quotient.;
- (g) **the Department** means the Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning;
- (h) **the Committee** means the Committee of Sustainable Building Practices.

## **PART II—Establishment**

### **Clause 4 Establishment of the committee of sustainable building practises**

- 4.1 A Committee of Sustainable Building Practises shall be established to assess and control the subsidisation of construction materials.
- 4.2 The committee will be composed of members of—
  - (a) the Victorian Building Authority;
  - (b) key manufacturers and suppliers;
  - (c) Sustainability Victoria.
- 4.3 The Committee of Sustainable Building Practises shall be responsible for ascertaining the amount of government subsidisation applied to each material based on its ecological quality and the price of its less sustainable market competitors.

### **Clause 5 Documentation of available sustainable materials**

- 5.1 A catalogue of sustainable building products available within the state of Victoria is to be documented by the Committee.
- 5.2 The catalogue shall include—
  - (a) a list of sustainable building materials available for purchase within the state of Victoria;
  - (b) financial ratings of all listed materials;
  - (c) ecological ratings of all listed materials.

### **Clause 6 Rebate on sustainable products for pre-existing homes**

- 6.1 The Committee shall be responsible for administering a rebate for the purchase of sustainable home fixtures.
- 6.2 The rebate shall be applicable for fixtures such as, but not limited to—
  - (a) LED lights;
  - (b) ceiling fans;
  - (c) draught stoppers.
- 6.3 The Committee shall ascertain the amount rebated based on products ecological quality and the price of less sustainable market competitors.
- 6.4 The rebate shall be made available to pre-existing homeowners.

### **Clause 7 Sustainability rating scheme for all residential building permits**

- 7.1 Each new residential planning permit submitted to local councils shall receive a sustainability rating.

- 7.2 This rating will become part of the building permit process for all new residential buildings in Victoria.
- 7.3 The rating shall be made on a SQ scale base whereby—
  - (a) homes need to be awarded an 100 point minimum for measures of sustainability. Measures which include but are not limited to—
    - (i) the inclusion of energy efficient lighting;
    - (ii) double glazing.
  - (b) points are then prescribed for the incorporation of extra sustainable materials and products.

**Clause 8 Compulsory solar panel instalment and buyer rebate**

- 8.1 The Committee shall ascribe a rebate for the installation of solar panels on all Victorian residential buildings.
- 8.2 It shall be compulsory for all pre-existing homes to have a minimum number of solar panels installed, to be determined by the Department.
- 8.3 In the instance that a home-owner wishes to install more than the minimum number of panels they shall be rebated per additional panel
- 8.4 In the instance that a particular dwelling would not sufficiently benefit from the addition of solar panels, the homeowner is responsible for taking other sustainability measures to make sure they comply with the minimum 100SQ rating for sustainable housing.

**Clause 9 Public Awareness of sustainable building practises**

- 9.1 A marketing scheme will be developed and launched by the Committee of Sustainable Building Practises. The scheme will—
  - (a) educate new home buyers in sustainable building practises;
  - (b) promote the benefits of sustainable building to the broader Victorian community.
- 9.2 Information on sustainable housing shall be displayed at venues visited by prospective and current homeowners, including but not limited to—
  - (a) real estate offices;
  - (b) local council receptions;
  - (c) architecture and drafting firms.
- 9.3 Upon engaging in home planning with an architectural or drafting firm the planning professional shall be in part responsible for ensuring the home buyer is made aware of—

- (a) the options for sustainable housing in compliance to the rating scheme;
- (b) the environmental and economic benefits of sustainable housing.

**Clause 10 Sustainable building practice education for Years 9 and 10**

- 10.1 The Committee shall design and develop a workshop series for delivery to students in Years 9 and 10.
- 10.2 The workshops shall be designed to educate students on the importance of sustainable living.
- 10.3 The workshops shall be delivered by members of the committee and industry experts employed by the committee.