

ENERGY USERS URGE BIPARTISAN SUPPORT FOR GAS RESERVATION LEGISLATION

Energy users welcome the tabling of gas reservation legislation in Federal Parliament today and urge all parties to support it to protect jobs, ensure the future of domestic manufacturing and lower energy bills for millions of Australians.

“We welcome gas reservation legislation being tabled in parliament and urge all political parties to work together to deliver a practical scheme that ensures Australian businesses can access competitively priced gas,” said Energy Users Association of Australia (EUAA) Chief Executive Officer Andrew Richards.

“Millions of Australians rely on the products made using gas every day, from food and fertiliser to bricks, steel, cement, glass and packaging. Gas also plays an important role in supporting a reliable electricity system as Australia transitions to renewables.”

“Without access to competitively priced gas, Australian manufacturers face tougher choices about whether they can continue producing here, investing here and employing Australians. Now is the time for Parliament to work constructively towards a solution. We cannot let perfect get in the way of good.”

There is broad recognition across the gas industry and its customers that current east coast gas market settings are not delivering the outcomes Australian businesses need. While views differ on the design of a reservation scheme, the case for addressing the market’s underlying problems is clear.

“After a decade of ACCC gas market reporting, we know the problems are not new. Australian businesses need reliable access to gas at prices that support domestic investment and production. We cannot afford to keep debating the problem without delivering a workable solution,” added Mr Richards.

The stakes extend beyond energy bills. Australia’s ability to manufacture essential products domestically is closely linked to its food security, economic resilience and sovereign capability.

At yesterday’s Australian Financial Review Climate & Energy Summit, Kagome, Australia’s largest tomato processor, warned of the risks to Australia’s food-producing capacity, telling the summit that current projections point to Australia becoming a net food importer by the mid-2030s.

“Australia is at a pivotal moment. Do we want to strengthen our capacity to make things here, support Australian jobs and communities, and build resilience against global supply shocks? Or do we want to become increasingly dependent on imported products and exposed to international prices and supply disruptions?” Mr Richards said.

The Energy Users’ Association of Australia (EUAA) is the peak body representing Australian commercial and industrial energy users. Our members are the engine room of the Australian economy, producing many of the products that households and business use every day including bricks, glass, steel, aluminium, paper, food and beverages. Combined our members employ over 1 million Australians, pay billions in energy bills every year and in many cases are exposed to the fluctuations and challenges of international trade.

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