

Bill Shorten energy policy dismissed as 'Pink Batt-eries'



The Opposition Leader plans to unveil a plan to install more than one million renewable batteries in Australian homes through incentives. Picture: AAP

Richard Ferguson, Reporter,

Sascha O'Sullivan, Cadet Journalist, 38 minutes ago November 22, 2018

Scott Morrison accused opposition leader Bill Shorten of being out of touch with the energy needs of every day Australians as he blasted Mr Shorten's proposed energy policy today.

And he said Australians should not trust the safety of renewable solar batteries which would be installed under the proposed policy.

The Prime Minister lashed out at Mr Shorten's energy policy, which promises to put \$15 billion into fixing the national energy network and subsidising solar storage batteries for 100,000 households.

Mr Morrison tore apart Labor's policy, saying it harked back to previous failed policy attempts and Mr Shorten's proposal of 45 per cent emissions reductions and 50 per cent renewable energy would be five times worse than Julia Gillard's carbon tax.

He linked the plan to install up to one million homes with batteries to Kevin Rudd's botched home insulation scheme, which led to the deaths of several electricians. "Can everyone remember the last time the Labor Party, when they

were in government, they tried to put something in your house? The insulation batts?

“What we have here is we have gone from pink batts to pink batteries. “If you couldn’t trust them to put in pink batts in your own roof without it setting on fire, I wouldn’t be trusting Bill Shorten to put a pink battery in your house either,” he told reporters in Sydney.

Mr Morrison labelled Labor’s battery policy and their 50 per cent renewable energy target a “throwback” to the controversial energy and climate change policies of Mr Rudd and Julia Gillard.

“I can’t understand how (Mr Shorten) thinks he’s in touch with the real cost pressures facing Australian families, this is just a repeat — a throwback to the same failed approach we saw from the Labor Party last time they were in government. They’ve learnt nothing, they’ve learnt absolutely nothing.”

Mr Morrison said Labor’s policy is unrealistic for everyday Australians. “If he thinks a family here in Sydney with two people earning about \$90,000 a year can somehow have a lazy \$10,000 hanging around to go and buy one of his pink batteries and somehow they’ll be able to afford to do that when actually keeping the pressure on to just pay for the electricity bills as they are,” Mr Morrison continued.

Meanwhile, the Opposition Leader has written to Mr Morrison and called for him to help pass Malcolm Turnbull’s National Energy Guarantee. “As Opposition Leader, I am prepared to work with you to implement a meaningful NEG framework that actually lowers power prices, reduces pollution, and delivers on our commitment for 50 per cent renewable energy by 2030,” he writes.

“And if I am elected Prime Minister, I will sit down with the new Opposition Leader and the cross-bench, to seek a way forward with this framework.”

‘Like the Cash for Clunkers’: Dutton

Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton joined the offensive against Labor’s planned \$2000 handout for home battery installations, invoking Kevin Rudd’s botched home insulation scheme and the “Cash for Clunkers” program this morning as he dismissed Mr Shorten’s plan. “This pink batteries debacle is like the Cash for Clunkers,” he told 2GB, “These people just don’t learn the lesson.”

Energy Minister Angus Taylor attacked the policy and said Labor's renewable energy target and battery plan would not help businesses who could suffer from coal-fired power stations closing down. "The real problem with this is, even if they install those batteries, it doesn't touch the sides. It's not even close to enough," he told 2GB. "If we want to keep jobs in this country, if we want to keep manufacturing, if we want to be a country that keeps making things, you have to have an electricity system that's affordable but can provide that reliable power."

Mr Shorten has taken to breakfast television to sell his battery scheme and said it was a "conservative solution" to renewables. "The beauty of the batteries is that the energy is going to be there when you need it not just when the sun is shining," he told the Nine Network. "I think it's actually a very conservative solution. Renewable energy plus storage equals reliable cheap energy."