



MEDIA RELEASE

To: News Editor
From: Uniting Church Synod of WA
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Uniting Church says State Climate Policy is a missed opportunity that leaves WA falling behind

Susy Thomas, Moderator of the Uniting Church WA, today expressed her disappointment at the lack of action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the WA State Climate Policy released this week.

“There are lots of promising project announcements collated here, many of which are welcome starting points, but what we are really looking for in a State Climate Policy are concrete parameters and an overarching plan for how to transition our economy and reduce emissions.

“As a church, we care deeply about the environment and the most vulnerable in our community. That is why our last Synod meeting in September called for a COVID-19 recovery package that prioritised both renewable energy and social housing.

“We see other states making very strong commitments for climate action and we really hoped that WA would follow suit.”

While other state’s climate strategies come with significant funding packages in the hundreds of millions of dollars, WA’s commitments to date are much more modest. With election promises soon to be made by all parties it is hoped that further allocations for climate action will emerge in WA.

The Uniting Church itself has committed to net-zero emissions by 2040 across its operations and has long divested itself from fossil fuels.

Ms Thomas questioned why the WA government couldn’t take a similar stance saying, “Certainly there are some welcome initiatives that have been coming through in WA like the strategies for renewable hydrogen, batteries and electric vehicles, but the development of a State Climate Policy was a real opportunity to take a stand and commit to a clear plan to bring down emissions with interim targets.”

Western Australia still does not have a Renewable Energy Target, or any interim emissions reduction targets and only an ‘aspirational net-zero by 2050’ goal, leaving its climate policy position well behind that of other jurisdictions.

“Unfortunately this State Climate Policy leaves us lagging behind other states even though we have the strongest economy and a \$1.2 billion surplus. This means we still have the opportunity to boost our climate commitments as we move into 2021.

“Given we have had rising emissions in WA over recent years largely due to the gas industry, it is troubling to see no requirements or clear plan for reducing emissions from that sector in particular.

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For media enquiries and interviews, please contact Marketing and Communications Manager, Maggie Johns on 0419 831 576