Dear Minister Naughten,

**Re: Kick-starting Community Ownership of Renewable Energy with a Fair Payment for Solar Electricity**

The overarching vision of Ireland’s energy policy is to become zero carbon, with a concrete target of 80-95% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from the energy sector by 2050. This national policy recognises the scale of the challenge to transition our energy system to zero carbon, and particularly recognises the importance of citizen and community participation in this transition.

However, today, Ireland relies on imported fossil fuels for about 85% of our energy needs. Within the electricity sector, about 75% of our electricity is generated using coal, gas and peat. While in recent years there has been a significant increase in renewable generation, less than 0.3% of this is owned by local citizens or communities.

Solar power offers a unique opportunity for citizens and communities to take part in the renewable transition and to provide diversity for our electricity generation. The roofs of our homes, our farm buildings, our schools, our community centres, our sports halls can all become locally-owned power plants. Households and communities could be generating an income from the clean energy they produce, reducing their demand for fossil fuel electricity and lowering their energy bills. But without any solar feed-in-tariff or the ability to sell electricity from micro-generation, this “rooftop revolution” will not happen in Ireland.

On behalf of my constituents, I am asking you to introduce a fair payment for solar electricity, so that solar generators, whether they are households, communities or businesses can get paid for the electricity that they export to the grid.

Yours sincerely,