Rewiring Aotearoa

Briefing to the Incoming Minister
November 2026

Lower bills. Local energy. Local jobs.

Four decisions for your first 100 days that cut household power bills, power more of NZ from our locally made energy, and protect New Zealand from fuel and gas price shocks.

10 million

fossil-fuelled machines still run our homes, farms, vehicles and factories, burning imported fuel and scarce local gas

About 84% have a cost-effective electric replacement available in New Zealand for when they wear out.

Saves homes thousands	New Zealand-made energy running through electric machines saves homes thousands, communities millions and the country billions.
Your portfolio holds the levers	The decisions in your portfolio will make this shift faster and cheaper over the long term.
Coordinated, this term	Working across portfolios lowers the cost of living this term and keeps jobs and skilled people here.

The opportunity

New Zealand has a largely renewable electricity system powered by our own natural resources. Yet around ten million fossil-fuelled machines still burn imported petrol and diesel and increasingly scarce local gas. Every one of them leaves households and businesses exposed to volatile international prices.

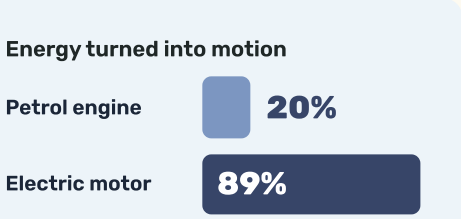
New Zealanders spent about **$19.5b on fossil fuels last year**, mostly imported. Every machine we switch keeps more of that money working in New Zealand.

Swapping these machines for electric ones running on locally made energy is one of the biggest opportunities we have to lower the cost of living and keep our economy growing.

$19.5b

spent on fossil fuels last year, mostly imported

Further, electric machines win on physics: a petrol engine turns about 20% of its fuel energy into motion, an electric motor about 89%. **Switching cuts how much energy we need, not just where it comes from.**



For most households, the largest savings come from the car in the driveway and how the home is heated. **An all-electric home with solar and a battery is around $3,000 a year better off, even after the upfront cost.**

Not from small changes to the power bill, like only filling the kettle with the water you need. (Yes, that is real guidance given to Kiwis struggling to pay their bills.)

$3,000 a year

better off in an all-electric home with solar and a battery, even after the upfront cost

Energy security works the same way: the biggest gains come from cutting our dependence on imported fuels and adding our own new renewable generation, not tweaks around the edges.

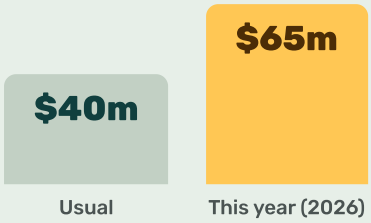
That is why Rewiring Aotearoa looks beyond electricity market fixes, across transport, homes, communities and industry. These are often treated as separate policy issues across departments, but they are **one energy system**.

We need a coordinated approach to the energy economy that lowers the cost of living, cuts our reliance on imported fuels, and keeps jobs and skills in New Zealand.

Why you need to act now

And the risk of waiting

What Kiwis spend at the pump, every day



$9b a year

The cost to the economy of an extended period of fuel at $3.30 a litre. That is about **2% of GDP**, or roughly **$4,000 to $6,000 per household** every year.[1]

$56m

of economic output lost for every 1 cent rise in fuel prices[1]

At the same time, domestic gas reserves are running low, so every firm that switches frees up gas for those that can't. Industrial gas users provide critical services and are core to our food, manufacturing and processing sectors. Even if the LNG terminal goes ahead, the fuel is expected to cost far more than our industries can afford. **It is not a long-term solution.**

+14%

rise in gas prices last year, after four straight years of increases

+50%

the gas price rise one major industrial user expects in 2027, with more to follow

Dry-year risk

The dry-year risk is still a real risk and has been priced into electricity contracts and has been pushing up bills every year. However, there is a cheaper way to keep the lights on in a dry year than importing expensive LNG.

More renewables, plus batteries and flexible demand can cut peak needs, and coal and diesel back-up can bridge the gap while more renewables are built.

Solar and batteries in homes, farms and businesses also reduce the need to fire up Huntly and help conserve hydro lakes in dry years.

Before New Zealanders fund an LNG terminal, we ask that it is tested through an independent process to test whether it is needed and in what specific circumstances.

Whatever happens with LNG, we must keep enough local gas for critical services and for industries that cannot easily switch in the short term. Most industrial users will need to move off gas to stay competitive in the long term. Rewiring Aotearoa has a Gas Action Plan ready for your consideration in your first 100 days.

[1] Principal Economics analysis, published March 2026, just after the conflict in Iran began.

Runs on the board: your first 100 days

Four decisions that are ready to go, low cost to the Crown, and felt in household budgets this term.

Legislate the Ratepayer Assistance Scheme

LEAD AGENCY MCERT

COST-OF-LIVING IMPACT
Homes, farms and businesses capture electrification savings (about **$1,000 a year** after loan repayments for home solar alone and more for an all-electric home) with no upfront cost.

COST TO THE CROWN
Low. $7m investment for ownership stake in Scheme to establish.

WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN
Enabling Act; Budget 2027.

SUPPORTING AGENCIES Treasury, MBIE, EECA

PORTFOLIOS Local Government, Finance, Energy, Climate Change

EV Salary Boost and lower FBT on EVs

LEAD AGENCY IRD, Treasury

COST-OF-LIVING IMPACT
Cheaper EVs for workers now. Businesses buy about 60% of new EVs, so more affordable second-hand EVs will follow within 3 to 5 years, and lower fuel bills.

COST TO THE CROWN
Forgone tax revenue, to be costed by Inland Revenue and Treasury.

WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN
Tax amendments; Budget 2027.

SUPPORTING AGENCIES Ministry for Cities, Environment, Regions and Transport (MCERT), EECA

PORTFOLIOS Revenue, Finance, Transport, Energy, Climate Change

Gas Action Plan

LEAD AGENCY MBIE, DPMC

COST-OF-LIVING IMPACT
Protects regional jobs, and food and manufacturing supply chains, from gas price shocks. Frees up gas for critical services and firms that can't switch.

COST TO THE CROWN
Staged fund of up to **$950m**: mostly loans, guarantees and targeted support.

WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN
Publish the Gas Action Plan. Cabinet decision on funding; Budget 2027.

SUPPORTING AGENCIES Treasury, EECA, Kānoa, Commerce Commission, GIC, MCERT

PORTFOLIOS Energy, Resources, Regional Development, Infrastructure, Climate Change, Finance

Energy market reform

LEAD AGENCY MBIE

COST-OF-LIVING IMPACT
Targets the biggest driver of rising power bills (network costs) and makes prices fairer for customers.

COST TO THE CROWN
Low. Within existing agency baselines.

WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN
Publish an updated Government Policy Statement on electricity and letters of expectations to regulators.

SUPPORTING AGENCIES Electricity Authority, Commerce Commission, Ministry for Regulation, GIC

PORTFOLIOS Energy, Commerce and Consumer Affairs, Regulation, Finance

What success looks like by 2029

If you implement these four actions, by the end of this term:



Ratepayer Assistance Scheme

$1,000

a year saved by each household with home solar, after loan repayments, and more for an all-electric home



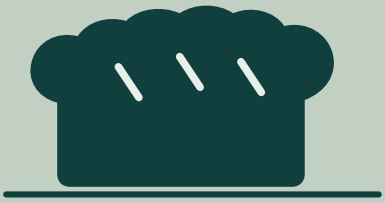
EV Salary Boost and supporting policies

30,000

more EVs on the road

$56m a year

saved by workers



Gas Action Plan

19,300

regional jobs on track to be saved

$1b to $1.7b

of regional economic activity annually by 2035



Energy market reform and multiple trading relationships (MTR)

Fairer prices

for every energy user, including households with solar and batteries who can sell power to another retailer or a neighbour

Five priorities for the energy portfolio

The full policy list is on our website at rewiring.nz.

PRIORITY	WHAT IT MEANS	KEY ACTIONS AND POLICIES
1 **Set a clear direction**	A long-term energy strategy with a pathway to affordable NZ-made energy, that sends a clear signal to industry and gives businesses confidence to invest.	• Publish a bipartisan energy strategy for affordable, secure, NZ-made energy • Solve the dry year at least cost, giving a renewable reserve a fair test against LNG
2 **Lower the cost of living**	Households can afford to upgrade, and the savings reach renters, retirees and low-income homes.	• **Deliver the Ratepayer Assistance Scheme** • Home battery subsidy, phased down over time • Let lines companies invest in solar and batteries for low-income homes where it beats network spending • Secured Sunshine: Government underwrites expected solar returns • Total cost of ownership labelling for vehicles, homes and appliances
3 **Run on NZ-made energy**	More households and businesses into EVs, cut imported fuel costs, protect the economy from global price shocks and regional jobs as gas declines.	**EVs** • **EV Salary Boost and lower FBT on EVs** • EV charging at strategic locations • Supercharged Investment Boost for EVs, electric machines, solar and batteries • Retain and strengthen the Clean Vehicle Standard **Gas and NZ made fuels** • **Gas Action Plan: DPMC transition team and Regional Industrial Energy Infrastructure Fund** • Renewable supply backstop, so new generation keeps pace with fuel switching • Long-term bioenergy supply contracts, building on existing EECA work on Wood Energy
4 **Fix the energy market**	Fair prices for customers, a competitive market that brings costs down, networks used efficiently, and rules that keep pace with technology.	• **Update the GPS on Electricity** • Make affordability a core objective of the Electricity Authority in law • First-principles review of energy regulation, including a single regulator • Network utilisation targets and cost-reflective pricing • Multiple trading relationships (MTR) and peer-to-peer trading • Virtual separation and a firm-energy contract market
5 **Speed things up and build the workforce**	Train more people, create more local jobs, faster, high-quality installs, and a trades workforce that can scale up to meet demand.	• Implement the Solar Review's Building Act recommendations; solar-ready new builds • Consent-free solar and batteries; fast connection approvals • Contestable connections, and export limits based on real network capacity • Electrification workforce programme: Apprenticeship Boost, micro-credentials, trades in schools

How we can help

Rewiring Aotearoa is an independent, evidence-led charity. We can brief you and your officials, and share the modelling, assumptions and sources behind every number in this briefing.

Local and regional data

Our Regional Reports (October 2026) show household savings, jobs and emissions reductions for every council and region. We can provide data for your local electorate or region: rewiring.nz/regional-reports

Evidence and modelling

Independent, peer-reviewed analysis, including the Household Electrification Model 2026, the Electric Homes and Vehicles 2026 report, and analysis of gas users.

Community reach

Rewiring supports 32 volunteer electric community groups across Aotearoa, running more than 50 events so far in 2026. Community events such as *Kill Bills: How to electrify your home and save thousands* have reached thousands of New Zealanders.

Policy ready to go

Detailed policies and actions, ready for officials to pick up. The full list is on our website at rewiring.nz.

Let's talk in your first 100 days

We would welcome a short meeting with you or your office, and can provide officials with a briefing on any of the four decisions in this paper.

Sources

1. Principal Economics, March 2026: economic cost of fuel price rises.
2. Rewiring Aotearoa, Household Electrification Model 2026 and Electric Homes and Vehicles 2026.
3. Rewiring Aotearoa, The Machine Count (April 2025) and Electrification Policy Manifesto (2025).