

Caroline Lucas condemns the energy efficiency-shaped hole at heart of energy plan for businesses



Green Party

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Caroline Lucas, Green Party MP for Brighton Pavilion, has the following response to BEIS Secretary Jacob Rees-Mogg's statement on energy bills support for businesses:

"No wonder Jacob Rees-Mogg clearly wished to avoid Parliamentary scrutiny on this critical energy crisis support for businesses – there is an energy efficiency-shaped hole at the heart of this plan that needs to be exposed.

"The cheapest and cleanest energy for businesses is the energy they don't use – so why is Rees-Mogg's plan utterly devoid of essential energy efficiency measures to help businesses reduce their dependence on costly fossil fuels, slashing bills and carbon emissions at the same time?

"Businesses themselves know the importance of net zero, even if climate sceptic Rees-Mogg doesn't – and on a day when over 100 of the UK's top businesses have called specifically for energy efficiency, a roll-out of renewables and large-scale industrial decarbonisation, this plan strips out green levies and continues with fossil fuel business-as-usual.

"The first rule of business is to plan ahead – and for this plan to send businesses off a cliff edge come April, when we know this energy crisis could get much worse in the months and years ahead, is irresponsible in the extreme.

"We can't expect small businesses to just keep lurching from one crisis to another – from Brexit, to Covid, and now an energy bills crisis. There are so many ways in which businesses could have been supported for the long term today: an extension of business rates relief for all SMEs and pubs; a suspension of Covid loan debt repayments; funding and incentives to help with planned energy use reduction. Instead all they get is sweeping fossil-fuelled short-termism."

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