



# Andrew Constance MP

## NSW Treasurer

### Minister for Industrial Relations

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **‘POLES AND WIRES’ LEASE: FAMILIES CAN BENEFIT FROM CHEAPER POWER BILLS**

The head of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has lent his considerable support to the NSW Liberals & Nationals plan to lease 49% of the state’s electricity networks, revealing it could reduce the cost of power bills.

The ACCC Chairman Rod Sims has told an ACCC / AER Regulatory Conference he is a strong advocate of the NSW Government’s strategy, commenting specifically on the proposed long term lease that: *“In my view such a sale can benefit NSW electricity consumers as network costs and therefore prices can be lower than otherwise”*.

Mr Sims also remarked: *“In my personal view, NSW electricity prices would now be significantly lower had the NSW electricity network assets been privatised, say, five years ago.”*

NSW Treasurer Andrew Constance has welcomed the endorsement of the NSW Government’s lease proposal, which would unlock \$20 billion to build the road and rail projects of the future.

“First and foremost our plan is about getting NSW moving,” Mr Constance said.

“But today’s remarks prove we’re building for the future in a responsible way, a way that can actually benefit families by putting downward pressure on power bills.

The ACCC Chairman has also highlighted the efficiency benefits that can be achieved with the leasing of electricity assets, saying that: *“with sound regulation the private sector will run these businesses more efficiently, as they will have better incentives for, and impose fewer constraints on, performance.”*

The NSW Government notes Mr Sims comments about avoiding anti-competitive sale structures, and welcomes his remarks that: *“...there seems to be no such issues with the NSW lease of electricity networks”*.

“Families can rest assured that the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has shown confidence in our plan to rebuild NSW, and how that plan can benefit urban congestion and help with the cost of living”, Mr Constance said.

“Should we receive a mandate next March, we’ll work to get the best outcomes for the people of NSW.”

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