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PRESS RELEASE

### **Council Calls More Transparency Amid Proposed Fuel Surcharge**

Transparency must take center stage, as we continue to face rising global fuel costs. The Consumer Council of Fiji is calling for a rigorous independent scrutiny regarding Energy Fiji Limited's (EFL) proposal to implement a fuel surcharge of approximately \$0.11 per kWh. While the Council recognizes the impact of rising global fuel prices, it has expressed conditional opposition to the surcharge in its submission to the Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission (FCCC).

“An 11-cent increase on the current tariff of 34 cents per kWh represents a significant rise, which would drive up electricity costs for both households and businesses. A family using 300kWh per month could face an additional \$33 on their bill. However, before any surcharge is considered, EFL must provide more information for consumers, as several critical areas still lack sufficient disclosure. In particular, the Government had announced fuel subsidies of 20 cents per litre on diesel and 12 cents per litre on heavy fuel oil. EFL must therefore present a detailed reconciliation demonstrating how these public funds have been accounted for in its reported \$12.26 million fuel cost variance,” said Seema Shandil.

The Council has outlined 3 essential conditions to protect consumer interests. First, the Council demands full transparency from EFL to justify the necessity of these charges. Secondly, any surcharge must be strictly temporary, with a mandatory rollback once global fuel prices stabilize. And third, robust safeguards must be implemented to ensure that businesses reverse any direct or indirect price hikes linked to energy costs, once the surcharge is lifted.

“Consumers must not be made to carry an unchecked or poorly explained cost burden,” said Council CEO Seema Shandil. “If the FCCC finds an adjustment is necessary to prevent a national energy crisis, it must be reasonable, targeted, and accompanied by the strongest possible consumer protections. We cannot allow a temporary shock to become a permanent burden on Fijian households.”

The Consumer Council of Fiji will continue to advocate for the rights of all consumers during this consultation process.

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