

A DIFFERENT APPROACH COMMUNITY Pty Ltd

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Senator S.J. McMahon
PO Box 6100, The Senate
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Senator S.J. McMahon

Zali Steggall is tabling a private members bill in Parliament in November. This bill doesn't call for yet another Royal Commission. It calls for a bipartisan approach to future energy planning, supported by an independent authority of scientific, social and economic experts. We urge you to support this Bill in the light of the following.

It has taken 500 million years for Earth's plants and animals to convert sunlight into fossil fuels. Humans have used over half of this accumulated energy in less than 200 years. Based on BP's Statistical Review of World Energy (2016) depletion times from 2020 for gas, oil and coal reserves are 33 years, 31 years and 103 years respectively.

Today's young people have grown up in a very different world from ours. They have routinely seen images of planet Earth taken from space in the form of satellite pictures forecasting our weather. They see the planet as a tiny speck in an ordinary galaxy in an unimaginably large universe. Their reality is of a small and fragile planet, with the biosphere a very thin layer within which life can exist. Over the next two decades, these young people will become voters and political leaders.

That we will emerge into a post fossil fuel economy and lifestyle by 2100 is therefore inevitable. What this new world will be like depends critically on our actions in the next twenty years. If we continue to use fossil fuels at the current rate, the world that emerges will be far less hospitable than if there is a managed transition to renewable energy. BP's Review estimates that if the global temperature rise is to be kept below 2^o C, 65% to 80% of these known fossil fuel reserves will have to be left untouched.

The Steggall's Bill is not just about carbon dioxide and global warming. It is about navigating our human societies into a hospitable future. The earlier the action the lower the cost will be in terms of overcoming the damage to our economy, to our environment and to our national security. This is recognised by Woodside, BHP, Bluescope, NAB, Australian Super and the Australian Farmers Federation who are all committed and moving to zero emissions by 2050.

Action is inevitable. The question is will it happen soon enough to prevent terminal damage to our economy and way of life.

It is time to stand and be counted!

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