

Dear Senators,

I write this submission to add my voice as an ordinary citizen to the cries for an understanding and implementation of a climate change strategy in Australia and the wider global environment.

I respectfully ask the Senate Inquiry to investigate

a) The costs imposed on the Australian Community by the increasing temperature caused by climate change

b) What strategies can be implemented to lessen the effect of climate change particularly change imposed on the more marginalised people in our communities e.g. the old, the mentally ill, the poor, the educationally disadvantaged, the disabled and victims of the range of social ills that exist in our community. These marginalised are the first to feel the crisis imposed by climate change.

c) The impact on Australian infrastructure: Transportation systems, community resources, water, health, energy supply, local government resources.

It is apparent from my perspective as an ordinary citizen that the challenges facing daily living are increasing in periods of excessive heat.

These changes are in the personal area maintaining personal health, changing lifestyle patterns to accommodate changed weather, changing energy consumption patterns, changing access to public and private health services that are overwhelmed by ongoing days of excessive heat. Changes in transportation systems that operate at reduced levels due to service failure during excessive heat periods. These issues impact me as an individual.

At the community level climate change reduces the economic resources of communities. The services identified above are overwhelmed. Community members are asked to contribute more on an ongoing basis to meet the changing needs that can be attributed to climate change.

The costs borne by community members seem to be excessive while large business groups who use community resources and make large profits while using these resources do not contribute at a rate that justifies their ongoing use. Community groups e.g. local councils continue to meet the needs of deteriorating infrastructure while these major users contribute little in proportion to ratepayers. Infrastructure continues to deteriorate and Councils fall further and further behind unable to meet the changing conditions imposed by climate change.

The destruction of our environment, built and natural is readily apparent. Contrasting the frequency of catastrophic weather events, analysing the losses caused by these weather events and understanding how these events occur provide indicators of the nature of climate change and how this change will affect the Australian economy and environment.

I respectfully ask that the Senate Inquiry to examine methods to:

a) Inform all Australians about the changes occurring in our environment and the impact of these changes

b) Ensure Australians are shown ways that we can assist in supporting our environment.

It seems that all this has been done before, however, there are competing interests that oppose such methods. It would be of great advantage to all Australians to hear these competing voices and be able to judge without economic coercion and political manipulation what is the best way forward.

After all this is about our country and about those who will come after us.

Lindsay Gardner