

The Senate

Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee

Climate Change Authority (Abolition) Bill
2013 [No. 2] [Provisions]

July 2014

© Commonwealth of Australia 2014

ISBN 978-1-76010-045-2

Committee address

PO Box 6100

Parliament House

Canberra ACT 2600

Tel: 02 6277 3526

Fax: 02 6277 5818

Email: ec.sen@aph.gov.au

Internet:

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Environment_and_Communications

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Australia License.



The details of this licence are available on the Creative Commons website:
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/au/>.

This document was printed by the Senate Printing Unit, Parliament House, Canberra

Committee membership

Committee members to 30 June 2014

Senator John Williams, Chair	NATS, New South Wales
Senator Anne Urquhart, Deputy Chair	ALP, Tasmania
Senator David Fawcett	LP, South Australia
Senator Louise Pratt	ALP, Western Australia
Senator Anne Ruston	LP, South Australia
Senator Larissa Waters	AG, Queensland

Committee members from 1 July 2014

Senator Anne Ruston, Chair	LP, South Australia
Senator Anne Urquhart, Deputy Chair	ALP, Tasmania
Senator Matthew Canavan	NATS, Queensland
Senator James McGrath	LP, Queensland
Senator the Hon Lisa Singh	ALP, Tasmania
Senator Larissa Waters	AG, Queensland

Participating member for this inquiry

Senator Christine Milne	AG, Tasmania
-------------------------	--------------

Committee secretariat

Ms Christine McDonald, Committee Secretary
Ms Sophie Power, Principal Research Officer
Ms Meryl Hampson, Research Officer
Mrs Dianne Warhurst, Administrative Officer

Table of Contents

Committee membership	iii
Inquiry into the Climate Change Authority (Abolition)	
Bill 2013 [No. 2] [Provisions].....	1
Labor Senators' Dissenting Report.....	3
Australian Greens' Dissenting Report	5

Inquiry into the Climate Change Authority (Abolition) Bill 2013 [No. 2] [Provisions]

1.1 On 26 June 2014, the Senate, on the recommendation of the Selection of Bills Committee, referred the provisions of the Climate Change Authority (Abolition) Bill 2013 [No. 2] (the bill) to the Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee (the committee) for inquiry and report by 14 July.¹

1.2 The committee notes that this bill contains identical provisions to the Climate Change Authority (Abolition) Bill 2013 referred to the committee by the Senate on 14 November 2013 with the Clean Energy Legislation (Carbon Tax Repeal) Bill 2013 and related bills. Following a full inquiry, the committee tabled its report on this inquiry on 2 December 2013.²

1.3 Therefore, the committee has resolved to reiterate the previous report of the committee on bills with identical provisions, that being the Climate Change Authority (Abolition) Bill 2013 [No. 2].

1.4 The committee reports accordingly.

Senator Anne Ruston
Chair

1 *Journals of the Senate*, No. 37, 26 June 2014, pp 1013–1016.

2 Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee, *Clean Energy (Carbon Tax Repeal) Bill 2013 [Provisions] and related bills*, December 2013.

Labor Senators' Dissenting Report

1.1 Labor Senators are deeply concerned that the Coalition Government is desperate for the Parliament to pass the Climate Change Authority (Abolition) Bill 2013 [No. 2].

1.2 Labor Senators sought an opportunity for submissions to be sought and witnesses to be called to update the Parliament on the valuable work of the Climate Change Authority since the previous inquiry reported in December 2013.

1.3 Labor Senators are deeply concerned that Government Senators used their majority to prevent the Committee from hearing this new evidence.

1.4 Labor Senators submit our original dissenting report, which is available at: http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Environment_and_Communications/Clean_Energy_Legislation/report/~media/Committees/Senate/committee/ec_ctte/Clean_Energy_Legislation/report/d01.ashx

Recommendation 1

1.5 Labor Senators recommend that Climate Change Authority (Abolition) Bill 2013 [No. 2] and associated bills not be passed.

**Senator Anne Urquhart
Senator for Tasmania**

**Senator the Hon Lisa Singh
Senator for Tasmania**

Australian Greens' Dissenting Report

1.1 The Australian Greens oppose the Climate Change Authority (Abolition) Bill 2013.

1.2 The importance of independent, apolitical advice based firmly in climate science and economic analysis cannot be understated at this point in Australia's history. At a time when scientific or economic evidence is either disregarded or treated with contempt by the Abbott government, the work of the Climate Change Authority is absolutely essential to inform public debate and the Parliament.

1.3 The Authority was set up, based on the success of the United Kingdom's Committee on Climate Change to impart recommendations to the Parliament on the level of ambition Australia—as a responsible global citizen—should adopt in driving greenhouse gas emissions reductions. It is above politics and was one of the central institutions established by the Greens and the multi-party climate change committee as part of the Clean Energy Package.

1.4 The Authority has to date provided detailed, evidence-based reports into surveying the international momentum on transitioning to low-carbon economies, fuel efficiency standards, reviewing the renewable energy target, recommending caps on Australia's emissions and an audit of the carbon farming initiative. The Authority's research and publication role is necessary to finding the most equitable, cost-effective solutions to the global warming challenges that confront our society and our economy.

1.5 To provide a recent example of the important function that the Authority provides, their report on the Renewable Energy Target was consultation-based and fact driven to recommend that the 41,000 gigawatt target be retained for the benefit of consumers, investors, employment, competition and our climate.

1.6 This report can be contrasted with the government's initiated review. The appointed chair of the panel, Mr Dick Warburton, is a climate denier with no experience in energy markets, while not one other member of the panel has any knowledge or experience in renewable energy. They were put there by the government to recommend a foregone conclusion: to weaken or repeal the *Renewable Energy Act 2001* because it is threatening the viability of incumbent fossil fuel generators of electricity.

1.7 Without the Authority's preceding report, a casual observer could be forgiven for believing that the government's inquiry was evidence-based and impartial. The Authority is obliged by law to complete another review of the RET by the end of 2014. The contrasting results between these two reviews of 2014 will reiterate the importance of independent and open advice to legislators.

1.8 The Australian Greens look forward to the future contributions the Authority will make to climate policy in Australia and therefore recommend opposing the bill in its entirety.

Senator Christine Milne
Leader of the Australian Greens

Senator Larissa Waters
Senator for Queensland