



Senator Chris Evans

Leader of the Government in the Senate

Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Jobs and Workplace Relations

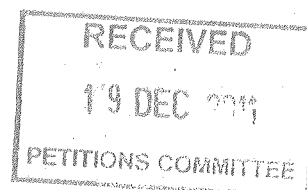
The Hon John Murphy MP

Chair

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Petitions

Parliament House

CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Mr Murphy

Thank you for your letter of 13 October 2011, on behalf of the Standing Committee on Petitions, concerning a petition from a group of citizens on the proposed carbon price and its effects on jobs.

The Australian Government is committed to a broad sustainability agenda. In the decades ahead, the Australian economy will continue to grow if we can embrace the opportunities arising from the transition to a clean energy, low carbon and resource efficient economy.

On 10 July 2011 the Prime Minister, the Hon Julia Gillard MP announced *Securing a Clean Energy Future: The Australian Government's Climate Change Plan*. Central to this plan is the introduction of a carbon price that will cut pollution in the cheapest and most effective manner, drive investment in new clean energy sources and enable a shift to more sustainable business practices. The *Securing a Clean Energy Future* plan also includes measures to promote innovation and investment in renewable energy, encourage energy efficiency and create opportunities in the land sector to cut pollution. Importantly, under the plan the Government will invest more than \$11 billion in carefully designed measures to support jobs and competitiveness as Australia moves to a clean energy future.

I am pleased to note that the 18 bills constituting the *Securing a Clean Energy Future* legislative package passed through the House of Representatives on 12 October 2011 and through the Senate on 8 November 2011.

Putting a price on carbon is likely to affect different industries in different ways, but Treasury modelling indicates that the aggregate number of jobs in Australia will continue to grow strongly while at the same time the growth of Australia's carbon pollution is expected to slow considerably. The shift to a clean energy, low carbon economy will provide new job opportunities for Australians, particularly in new or fast growing clean industries such as renewable energy, ecotourism, carbon farming and sustainable design. New opportunities will also emerge in existing industries as enterprises move to implement new business practices to increase their efficiency and competitiveness.

The Government recognises the importance of continued jobs growth and the necessary investment in skills and workforce development to achieve this aim. As part of the *Securing a Clean Energy Future plan*, the Prime Minister announced the Clean Energy and Other Skills Package on 12 July 2011. Through this package, up to \$32 million over 4 years will be invested to enable tradespeople and professionals in key industries to develop the skills needed to deliver clean energy services, products and advice to Australian communities and businesses. The package is being implemented by my Department.

As the Australian economy continues this transition towards green growth, skills for sustainability will be increasingly important across the entire workforce. Workers with sustainability skills will have the capacity to increase energy efficiency, reduce waste, conserve water and develop and implement sustainable technologies and practices.

My Department has a central role in promoting the uptake of these skills across the economy through embedding skills for sustainability principles and practices throughout the National Training System. To help build the capacity of the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector to provide skills for sustainability, the Council of Australian Governments endorsed a national *Green Skills Agreement* to ensure that practical sustainability training is a fundamental part of all VET programs.

More information is available at www.deewr.gov.au/skillsforsustainability.

Through initiatives such as these the Government is ensuring that all Australians are able to participate and prosper in Australia's Clean Energy Future.

I trust the information provided is helpful.

Yours sincerely

CHRIS EVANS

5.12.11.