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From: Helena Merrett [SMTP:helle_marie@yahoo.co.uk]
Sent: Wednesday, August 23, 2000 1:53 PM
To: jsct@aph.gov.au
Subject: Ratify the Kyoto Protocol

The Chair,

I a year 12 student currently completing my VCE and despite my preoccupations with study and exams, I am taking the time to demand that the upcoming Parliamentary Inquiry in the Kyoto Protocol ignores the interference of climate skeptics such as the 'Lavoisier Group' or the demands of fossil fuel companies to increase greenhouse emissions.

As a young Australian, I was disgusted at the Government's stance on greenhouse emissions at the Kyoto Conference. While many countries aimed to lower emissions, Australia demanded an increase which will increase the effects the of global warming. This is a decision from which my generation will come to bear the huge implications of in our lifetime, such as increased risk of respiratory illness, cancers, loss of biodiversity, the melting of glaciers and polar icecaps which in turn raise sea levels - all irreversible impacts. Obviously our Prime Minister was not too concerned about things that will occur beyond him.

There are plenty of alternative energy sources that Australia should begin the process of adapting to in order to reduce emissions. As a Chemistry student I understand that unrenewable forms of energy such as nuclear energy produce no emissions and are favoured by many other European nations such as France. While our Government has made the decision to continue with Jabiluka mine, why don't they make use of the fact that Australia is one of the largest suppliers of uranium in the world? Other forms of truly environmentally friendly energy sources include: solar power (an industry in which Australia possesses immense potential), hydroelectricity, wind and wave power or fuel cell technology which has a minimum of 80% energy efficiency compared to 30% with coal. Perhaps these alternatives are not currently as economically feasible as our Government would like them to be, but they all are industries in which Australia has great potential if we begin to develop them now.

We must aim to reduce our CO2 emissions, in order to avoid the costs that will hit our nation in the future if the Kyoto Protocol is not adhered to. Why? Because our ecosystem is fragile and will be destroyed, global warming is happening due to the increasing imbalance of greenhouse gases and because fossil fuels are a finite

resource.

Thank you for taking the time to read this statement.

Helena Merrett