

Dear Senators

I wish to add my voice to your enquiry and thank you for the opportunity.

My wife and I have worked hard to reduce our carbon footprint, and we are not as obsessed with the cost of doing so as politicians would have us believe. Some things have value other than the monetary. For a long time we have paid a premium for 100% wind power as we did not wish to contribute to the burning of brown coal. I have also converted my business to the same. Most nights I personally turn off the multiple computers in my office, turn off excess lighting in the building, and make sure that all our waste paper goes to recycling.

I am therefore deeply disappointed that, as well as being fairly pathetic, the targets for carbon emission control will be undermined at the community level, where they have most support.

I do not want my efforts to instal solar hot water etc. to be credited to a large company that should instead be looking at ways to cut its own emissions. There is low-hanging fruit in, for example, making sure lights are turned off after hours, or air conditioning controls are set at less arctic levels - even these "innovations" which save money will not be bothered with unless there is a clear economic imperative for companies. To suggest that there would be any impetus to invest in brand new energy saving technology or practices is surely laughable under the suggested scheme.

I also cannot believe that energy workers cannot be re-trained and re-deployed in green economy jobs such as solar panel and wind turbine construction and maintenance. The retraining itself could be paid for out of an economic stimulus package which would ensure those vulnerable to the changing economy can be retained in the workforce. I believe we should be an exporter of green technology as well as supplying ourselves - this would ensure an economy of scale and a major employment pool.

I think we are also setting ourselves up to be the laughing stock of the developed world - imagine if the US has a stronger and more effective carbon reduction policy than ours after they have been considered the emission pariahs for decades. We, as a country, are now, and will be in future, affected adversely by climate change and we have the affluence to do something about it. How foolish we will look if we hold up the current plan as our paltry contribution when the world is looking back on what went wrong.

Please consider, at the very least, increasing the required reduction, so that big business will have to work hard in unison with the community. Better still, local and state government initiatives and voluntary contributions of individual citizens should not be counted at all toward any target, so that innovation and energy-saving in industry can be encouraged.

Yours faithfully

Gavin M Wright