

To Senators on the Senate Select Committee on Climate Policy,

Carbon pollution must be reduced by more like 40%-50% of 1990 levels; 5-15% is outrageously weak. Scientific evidence increasingly shows that the rate of climate change is much faster than originally thought; there is simply no time for delay and everything possible must be done.

The scheme actually pays ("compensates") heavy polluters to continue polluting. Even worse, because the CPRS sets a "cap" under which emissions cannot fall, whenever citizens pay for something out of their own pocket to reduce their household or business emissions, it opens up more credits to pollute by industries who are already getting away with doing nothing, and being paid for it, money that should be invested in new clean energy technology or distributed to householders and small businesses to help them reduce their environmental impact. This is scandalous and must be amended.

Another problem is that setting weak targets now means that industry is uncertain whether in future the targets will have to be revised downwards again, which would result in further, politically even more unpalatable, costs to industry. Bite the bullet; set proper targets right from the start so industry can plan accordingly. Setting ambitious targets and throwing resources at encouraging new technologies will create new jobs and business opportunities; weak targets and uncertainty leave us and our economy floundering behind the rest of the world.

Finally, the CPRS is not the end of the story; many other actions can have significant effects on reducing the nation's carbon emissions, such as renewable energy feed-in tariffs, increased energy efficiency standards for homes and commercial buildings, fuel efficiency standards, investing in public transport, and stopping logging of native old growth forests. These ideas should be vigorously pursued irrespective of the CPRS.

Climate Change Minister Penny Wong has described the CPRS as 'better than nothing', but she is wrong. It is worse than useless.

Please listen to expert advice and act for the environment and the global community, not just for short term political ends.

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