

To whom it may concern,

The government's current weak stance on addressing the MAJOR concern of climate change disappoints me greatly. I had expected a Labor government to show more bravery, and this undermined my general exultation that the 'good guys' are now in power.

I'm aware that this is a particularly sensitive time financially, and that the government will be scared to rock that boat for the greater good - but the future of the world is, in my opinion, just a little bit more important than money!

For instance, I would not only be willing to pay extra money for green services and policies (and please note I am a pathetically low income earner, with a large mortgage) - I would embrace this actively. I already pay extra money voluntarily for 100% green gas and electricity in my home, and offset my car use with Greenfleet.

That the proposed policy undermines my personal efforts in this regard is such an insult. It gives off a terribly disappointing message to Australian citizens. Please realise that people will take this PERSONALLY!

We have an opportunity now to show leadership in a global context on a vital international issue. How do you expect poorer countries to do their bit when a country as fortunate as Australia acts so weakly? I want to be proud of my country, and for this to happen we need strong leaders who aren't afraid to do the right thing, even if it means, for example, that some jobs are temporarily lost as new technology takes over the old. (Replace forestry jobs with new green jobs! PLEASE!)

Meanwhile, the icebergs are melting... read yesterday's 'Age' - it's happening RIGHT NOW!

I would be so very very proud if Australia led the way in terms of environmentally friendly technology. We used to be able to boast about our research into solar power, but that was ages ago and much has changed since then. I was so ashamed, for example, when Vestas actually gave up on us and packed its bags for greener shores (pardon the pun). A close friend of mine works for them, and was forced to move to Denmark! Where he is doing excellent work, and helping to lead the way - in another country, because he gave up on ours.

This issue affects everybody, and it needs to be treated the right way and with the right level of dedication if everybody is to get on board and help to make some big changes. (Like with CFC sprays all those years ago.)

I'll end with a few small particular suggestions:

- charge people 50c per plastic bag in shops
- more support for developing community (and personal? rebates for bokashi buckets etc?) gardens so people can grow their own greens
- rooftop gardens and cool new green urban designs! (lots of suggestions are available from the annual sustainable futures festival.)
- more trams in peak hour, oh pleeease more trams, it is a horrible, horrible experience to commute within melbourne at these times, and frequently downright dangerous
- more/better recycling of water at plants
- practical support/subsidies for people to hook up water-saving devices, e.g. I have no idea how to run water from the washing machine or kitchen sink into the garden but I'd love to do it (the current showerhead program, with its straightforward instructions, is a good e.g. of a successful program like this)
- laws guiding design of a whole range of products so they don't waste electricity, e.g. banning multiple-powerpoint sockets that have a completely unnecessary light on them, or office phones that flash or glow all night
- incentives for businesses to be audited by a professional body and make changes to reduce their carbon footprint; and possibly the necessity for all businesses to indicate their level of 'greenness' on their website?

- more info on packaging of products across the range to indicate its carbon footprint??
- laws to reduce packaging in general; it's absurd! (e.g. Safeway's deli insists they must wrap every item you buy in plastic, then in paper - why?! If you request just one or the other, the employees explain they can't do this or they'll get in trouble)
- more and safer bike paths (though I don't ride myself)

Thank you for listening!

Elise Jones