

Abbott will hold Australia back: Lib Senators must vote with conscience on climate change

The creation of thousands of new Australian jobs will be held back by the Liberal Party's new leader Tony Abbott, a leading denier of climate change, say unions.

"As Liberal leader, Mr Abbott should not force his party to act like dinosaurs on climate change," said ACTU President Sharan Burrow.

"He now has a responsibility to put his personal prejudices aside and allow a conscience vote on the issue.

"Mr Abbott may not believe climate change is real, but he cannot ignore the economic reality that the rest of the world is already moving rapidly, cornering a \$6.1 trillion dollar market in clean technology jobs, products and industries.

"Without our climate laws in place, we are missing the economic boat.

"Those members of the Liberal Party who care about the environment, the economy and the jobs of working Australians should look to their conscience and vote to pass the CPRS as soon as possible.

"This will unlock the billions of investment dollars we need to begin our transition to a low carbon economy.

Modeling by Treasury and a range of independent reports shows we can create up to a million new clean energy jobs in the next 20 years in new and existing industries if we act urgently to put our climate laws in place.

"Australia does not want to become the world's carbon pollution rust-bucket by failing to modernise and invest. Business leaders have made it clear they want certainty and the public has made it very clear in a succession of opinion polls that it wants action on climate change from our political leaders. Mr Abbott must listen to that message."

Liberals to bring back WorkChoices under Abbott

Ms Burrow said that the election of Mr Abbott as Liberal leader is a clear sign the Coalition will bring back WorkChoices under a different name if re-elected.

"Mr Abbott will reintroduce AWA individual contracts, attack the award safety net and take away workers' protection from unfair dismissal.

"He is a staunch defender of the former Howard Government's unfair industrial relations laws and advocates flexibility for employers at the expense of workers' rights.

"Already today he has refused to rule out bringing back WorkChoices under another name. His track record shows he cannot be trusted by working Australians," Ms Burrow said.

***** Sharan Burrow is available for interview on request *****

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