

Friday 23 July 2010

New climate change plan will protect jobs and create opportunities for local industry

Tens of thousands of Australian jobs will be better protected and the future of our energy sector and broader economy will be more secure as a result of the Labor Government's climate change plan say unions.

ACTU president Ged Kearney welcomed Labor's move to support businesses that begin to reduce emissions ahead of a price on carbon and said this would provide greater certainty for planning and investment in key industries.

"The reality is there will need to be a change in the way we use energy in the long-term – acting now is the best way to minimise the impact on workers across the economy by helping new clean energy industries to grow and existing industries to modernise their processes," Ms Kearney said.

"The fact is that the Coalition continues to oppose meaningful climate change action and has run a disgraceful campaign of misinformation. That means we do need to build a new community consensus on the issue.

"Having a forum to do that is a worthwhile initiative and unions look forward to being actively involved."

Tony Maher, ACTU Climate Change Convenor and Federal President of the CFMEU said new measures to require power stations to control their carbon emissions would send a signal that the future of power generation is in low emission technologies.

"This emissions standard is a start and provides a level of certainty to both industry and the market that the government will take the steps required to address climate change," Mr Maher said.

"In contrast the Coalition is slashing spending on Carbon Capture and Storage programs.

"The reality is this election offers a stark choice between a party taking action to transform the energy sector and a party who threatens it by denying that climate change exists.

"Unions have long argued that the biggest threat to jobs is to deny climate change is occurring – but that is precisely what the Coalition is doing.

"In contrast Labor has renewed its commitment to the environment and a cleaner economy and is taking the first steps toward establishing a combination of regulation and carbon price to control carbon pollution."

Media contacts:

Hamish Quinn 0423 375 522

Tony Maher 0418 286 735