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10 August 2022

Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications

By email: ec.sen@aph.gov.au

Re: Climate Change Bill 2022 and the Climate Change (Consequential Amendments) Bill 2022

The Australian Services Union (ASU) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on the Climate Change Bill 2022 and the Climate Change (Consequential Amendments) Bill 2022.

The ASU is one of Australia's largest Unions, representing approximately 135,000 employees. The ASU is Australia's largest union in the energy/electricity industry with ASU members working in a variety of classifications across electricity generation, distribution, retail and transmission.

Like all workers, ASU members have an interest in climate change, and how it will affect our working place, our quality of life and our communities.

The ASU welcomes the Government's objectives for addressing climate change through the Bills and support:

- The emissions reduction targets of 43 per cent below 2005 levels (as a floor) by 2030 and net zero by 2050.
- The publication of an annual climate change statement on progress towards the targets.
- The role for the Climate Change Authority who will be required to give advice on the annual climate change statement and future emissions reduction targets.
- A periodic independent review of the Climate Change Act.
- Other agencies and bodies including the Clean Energy Finance Corporation, Australian Renewable Energy Agency, and Infrastructure Australia will have new statutory objectives to pursue the targets, further consolidating a broad, whole-of-Government approach to tackling climate change.

The Bills before the Senate are an important first step and should be supported. However, the ASU is concerned about the lack of Just Transition language in the Bills. The Climate Bills must play a critical role in ensuring Australia adheres to all of the commitments in the Paris Agreement, including fair employment transitions. We urge the Committee to ensure that fair employment and just transition principles are included in the Bills to ensure better outcomes for workers and their communities.

We also support the establishment of a national Energy Transition Authority to manage and drive the shift to renewables, and ensures no worker or community is left behind.

We view that fighting for a just transition for our workers and our planet is core business. We also know that we cannot allow the climate action debate to be one where workers and climate action are pegged against each other. Our members deserve both a clean energy future and good secure well valued jobs in all regions.

Finally, the ASU is aware that several other Unions and affiliates are making submissions in response to the proposed Bills. The ASU supports those submissions and the recommendations contained within.

Yours faithfully



Robert Potter
NATIONAL SECRETARY