



4 March 2017

The Honourable Josh Frydenberg  
Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr Frydenberg,

**Re: Concern for the environment**

I write of behalf of the Social Justice Committee of the Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes NSW. CLRI(NSW) represents approximately 2,600 Catholic Religious women and men and their associates. We have a long history of working with people pushed to the edges, and particularly at this time, for people suffering because of critical issues around climate change.

We are seriously troubled about the way that you and your Government have resorted to dishonesty in your discussion of the current energy crises in this country. The increase in extreme weather events and the clear need for a sustainable, secure, and less polluting energy supply, are recognised widely across the scientific and broader community. Your distortion of the facts about 'clean coal' and the causes of the blackouts in South Australia are deeply concerning.

We had thought that your concern for your own children's future, if not that of other Australians and indeed the world community, would have led to serious efforts to achieve a bipartisan agreement for a consistent, environmentally sustainable future.

It seems however that the goals of many politicians is no greater than victory at the next election. Such a reality is profoundly disappointing. I wonder how your children and grandchildren will judge your actions in years to come.

We urge you and your fellow Parliamentarians to rethink your position. If our elected representatives can shift to a position where a concern for future generations becomes more important than your own political fortune and the immediate (if questionable) economic outcomes, we believe that some of the credibility you have lost as a Government (and indeed Opposition) will be restored.

We urge you therefore to work towards a bi-partisan policy, which prioritises:

- An integration of legislation to ensure strategic planning and development outcomes, which are environmentally, socially and economically sustainable
- The regulation of better science and data collection and a more honest and transparent approach to environmental issues
- A reduction in reliance on fossil fuels, and conversion to renewable, cost-effective energy based on wind, solar and other technologies
- A reduction in Government support (through contracts, financial subsidies and legislation) for coal, gas and mineral industries

We believe that the conservation of the earths' resources is vital for our own and the planet's survival. We ask that you, as our elected Member of Parliament and the minister responsible for this area, will consider, in your ongoing deliberations, the future of our planet more than your own political future.

Yours in hope,

Jan Barnett rsj  
On behalf of CLRI(NSW)