

Association québécoise de lutte contre la pollution atmosphérique (AQLPA) | BC Sustainable Energy Association | Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) | Canadian Youth Climate Coalition | Citizens Environment Alliance of Southwestern Ontario | Clean North | Clean Nova Scotia | Climate Action Network Canada – Réseau Action Climat Canada | Coalition QuébecKyoto | Conservation Council of New Brunswick | The David Suzuki Foundation | EcologyAction Center | Edmonton Friends of the North Environmental Society | Environmental Defence | Équiterre | ForestEthics | Forum for Leadership on Water (FLOW) | Friends of the Earth Canada | Greenpeace | Greenspiration | KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives | The National Union of Public and General Employees | Nature Canada | Nature Saskatchewan | The Pembina Institute | Saskatchewan Environmental Society | Sierra Club Canada | Toronto West CRAG | Vegetarians of Alberta Association | Voters Taking Action on Climate Change | The World Federalist Movement-Canada | WWF-Canada

February 23, 2009

Dear Mr. Harper, Mr. Ignatieff, M. Duceppe and Mr. Layton,

The undersigned organizations working on climate change in Canada are calling for the swift passage of the Bill C-311, entitled *An Act to ensure Canada assumes its responsibilities in preventing dangerous climate change* (the “Climate Change Accountability Act”).

This bill would set national greenhouse gas emission targets for Canada that align with scientific assessments of the emission reductions needed to have a chance of avoiding dangerous climate change. The bill would also require the federal government to take the necessary steps to ensure the targets are met.

This December, countries will gather in Copenhagen for historic negotiations to finalize a global climate treaty that will apply after 2012, when the Kyoto Protocol’s first commitment period ends.

The Climate Change Accountability Act would set national emission targets that represent Canada’s fair share of this global effort to prevent dangerous climate change. Thus, a decision by Canada’s Parliament to adopt these targets would send a strong signal to the world that Canada intends to do its part in tackling global warming and protecting the most vulnerable people from its devastating consequences.

Economic analysis produced by M.K. Jaccard and Associates, a prominent Canadian modelling firm, shows that Canada can reach a science-based emissions target in 2020 while growing its economy by 2% per year and creating over one million net new jobs.

It is also notable that the 2050 target in the Climate Change Accountability Act is identical to President Barack Obama’s 2050 target for U.S. emissions.

On June 4, 2008, this bill (then known as C-377) won support from a majority of Members of Parliament and was referred to the Senate for consideration. As Parliament was dissolved in the fall of 2008, the bill was not able to complete the legislative process.

In its previous iteration, the Climate Change Accountability Act was introduced and championed by the leader of the New Democratic Party, Jack Layton. While we commend Mr. Layton and the

NDP for this leadership, we believe that Canada's national emission targets are far too important to become a partisan question. All parties in Canada's Parliament have stated their support for climate action, and all Members of Parliament and Senators must play a responsible part in preventing dangerous climate change.

Thus, we call on all parties in Canada's Parliament to work together and pass this essential piece of legislation before the summer recess.

We recognize that this timeline is ambitious, but global warming is urgent. In addition, we note that the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development gave this bill extensive consideration at committee stage last year. Since then, neither the bill itself nor the science underlying it has changed — although the passage of time has made it even more urgent.

Of course, this bill alone is not the whole answer for Canada's climate policy. It sets and enforces national emission targets, but it leaves the preparation of plans to meet those targets to the Minister of the Environment. And while strong targets for industrialized countries are an essential ingredient for a successful outcome in Copenhagen, so too is financial support from developed countries for tackling climate change in developing countries, an issue that is not included in this private member's bill.

Canadians want to see our country play a leadership role this year in Copenhagen, and they care deeply about protecting our natural heritage. The Climate Change Accountability Act is an essential step towards those goals. Please work together to make it law this year.

Sincerely,

Association québécoise de lutte contre la  
pollution atmosphérique (AQLPA)  
BC Sustainable Energy Association  
Canadian Union of Public Employees  
(CUPE)  
Canadian Youth Climate Coalition  
Citizens Environment Alliance of  
Southwestern Ontario  
Clean North  
Clean Nova Scotia  
Climate Action Network Canada – Réseau  
Action Climat Canada  
Coalition QuébecKyoto  
Conservation Council of New Brunswick  
The David Suzuki Foundation  
EcologyAction Center  
Edmonton Friends of the North  
Environmental Society  
Environmental Defence  
Équiterre  
ForestEthics  
Forum for Leadership on Water (FLOW)

Friends of the Earth Canada  
Greenpeace  
Greenspiration  
KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice  
Initiatives  
The National Union of Public and General  
Employees  
Nature Canada  
Nature Saskatchewan  
The Pembina Institute  
Saskatchewan Environmental Society  
Sierra Club Canada  
Toronto West CRAG  
Vegetarians of Alberta Association  
Voters Taking Action on Climate Change  
The World Federalist Movement – Canada  
WWF-Canada

*And as individuals:*

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