



CLIMATE AND
HEALTH
ALLIANCE

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A carbon price is good for health

As the new Senate meets to vote on the federal government's proposed repeal of the carbon price legislation, health and medical groups have joined dozens of civil society organisations in condemning the move, saying a price on carbon is a "health protection measure".

President of the Climate and Health Alliance, Dr Liz Hanna, said health and medical groups were united in their opposition to the carbon price repeal, saying climate change was having profoundly negative health impacts and a carbon price was a vital measure to limit the harm to health from climate change and drive the shift to cleaner renewable energy.

"Carbon pricing has already had an impact on cutting emissions from dirty energy sources such as coal in the electricity sector. This benefits health because it limits the harmful air pollution that communities near power stations are exposed to, but it also helps reduce risks to health from climate change by reducing greenhouse gases," Dr Hanna said.

"The world is moving towards pricing carbon, and Australia is risking its reputation as a good global citizen, as well as the health of the population, if the Senate votes to abolish the price on carbon."

"A price on carbon is a disincentive to produce greenhouse gases. It makes carbon intensive energy sources more expensive, and that's a good thing, because at the moment, they appear artificially cheap, because the costs to health, and costs of environmental damage are not being factored in."

"The reality is, burning fossil fuels such as coal, is not 'cheap'. Coal causes billions of dollars in health damages each year in illnesses and deaths associated with harmful air pollution – a cost that is borne by the tax-paying community, not polluting industries, which profit from dirty energy."

"We need a carbon price to send a price signal, a financial disincentive, to using polluting and harmful energy sources. We need a carbon price as a health protection measure," Dr Hanna said.

CAHA is a coalition of 26 healthcare groups, representing public health professionals, medical, nursing, social work, physiotherapists, allied health, psychologists and health promotion, as well as health care service providers and research and academic organisations. Its members collectively present hundreds of thousands of health professionals across Australia.

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