



Media Release

Senator Alan Eggleston

Liberal Senator for Western Australia

ETS inquiry is a farce – Eggleston

21st May 2009

“The Rudd Government has turned their ETS inquiry into a farce, denying witnesses the right to appear before the Committee, according to Western Australian Liberal Senator Alan Eggleston.

Labor Senators yesterday put forward a list of witnesses attending hearings on the amended Climate Pollution Reduction Scheme, a list which failed to include representation from the industries that will be most effected by the scheme.

As Deputy Chair of the Economics Committee, Senator Eggleston said it was the responsibility of the Committee to ensure all parties affected by the CPRS had the opportunity to respond to the proposed scheme, not just those who looked favourably on Labor’s proposal.

“The list of witnesses Labor has put forward is a who’s who of Labor lackeys and left wing fanatics, not a true representation of Australian industry,” Senator Eggleston said.

“There is no representation from businesses such as Bluescope, One Steel, Exxon, Woodside, Xstrata and Caltex,”

“These are the companies that drive our economy, employing thousands of people and pouring billions of dollars into the Government’s coffers, and who will ultimately carry the brunt of the CPRS,”

Senator Eggleston said the Coalition Senators put forward a proposed list of witnesses that represented the industries affected, including the cement and mining industries, as well as local government, but were ignored by the Government.

“The Rudd Government has refused to accept our suggestion for a balanced and fair approach to this hearing, rejecting all but two of our suggested references, and instead compiled a list designed to produce a report favourable to the Government’s point of view,”

“This goes to show just how contemptuous Labor is towards the role of the Senate and the proper process of Government,”

Senator Eggleston said the proposed CPRS could have an enormous cost on Australian industry, result in a loss of jobs, and drive industries such as oil refining and cement overseas.

“In a time of financial crisis the Australian people should not be denied the right to review and contribute to the government’s plans to tax local industries billions of dollars, a plan that will shape the future of Australia,” he said.

“The tight timeframe for the inquiry and refusal to permit a more representative range of witnesses to attend is a gross abuse of the Senate and an abuse of the Australian public’s right to participate in the Senate Committee process,” the Senator said.

Senator Eggleston said the CPRS should be subject to full and open consideration, over a sufficient period of time and with fair and balanced input that reflects the importance of the legislation to the future of the people of Australia.

“This is significant Legislation that deserves considerable review and scrutiny before it is put into effect; that is the purpose of the Senate and today the Rudd Government has turned it into a farce,” the Senator said.

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