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Dear Members

Thank you for your interest in Labor's policies as we head to the election. Please find information on our policies below.

Climate Change and Renewable Energy

Only a Federal Labor Government can deliver real action to tackle climate change in Australia.

While the Liberals are still disputing whether the science is settled on climate change, Labor knows it is. We do not consider climate change a question of belief - we know it is an environmental and economic reality. The cost of inaction, to our environment and our economy, will be profound. This is not a price Labor is prepared to make the next generation of Australians pay.

After six years of chaos, uncertainty and rising pollution under the Liberals, Australians need stability and certainty on climate change policy – that is what a Shorten Labor Government will deliver.

Labor is committed to reducing Australia's pollution by 45 per cent on 2005 levels by 2030 and reaching net zero pollution by 2050. We will also deliver 50 per cent renewable energy in our electricity mix by 2030, including:

- Setting a target of one million household battery systems by 2025 and providing a \$2,000 rebate for 100,000 households to purchase and install battery systems.
- Investing up to \$1 billion from the CEFC to help schools access solar panels and battery storage through a Solar Schools Program.
- Establishing a Neighbourhood Renewables Program to ensure renters and social housing residents can benefit from cheaper and cleaner renewable energy.
- Doubling capital of the Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC) by \$10 billion.

LABOR'S SENATE TEAM

Standing up for South Australia



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A key part of tackling pollution will be tackling transport emissions - which make up almost 20 per cent of Australia's emissions and one of the fastest growing sources of pollution. Labor will implement Australia's first national electric vehicle policy, setting a national electric vehicle target of 50 per cent new car sales by 2030 and introducing vehicle emissions standards to reduce pollution and make the cost of driving a car cheaper for consumers.

You can read more about our Climate Change Action Plan here:

<https://www.alp.org.au/policies/real-action-on-climate-change/>

Labor's plan will cut pollution, bring down power prices and deliver a modern energy system - transitioning Australia to a clean economy with good jobs, better health outcomes, a sustainable environment and innovative new industries.

We will drive new investment in renewable energy generation and storage and transform Australia's energy supply systems – delivering more renewables and cheaper, cleaner power for all Australians.

Our plan includes a ten-year energy investment framework that delivers certainty for industry, lower power prices and more reliability.

Labor will continue to pursue a bipartisan market mechanism, such as a National Energy Guarantee, that could deliver on our commitment of 50 per cent renewable energy by 2030 while lowering prices for Australian families and business. We will:

- Give businesses the policy certainty to invest in clean energy by implementing Labor's National Energy Plan. Labor will continue to pursue a bipartisan mechanism, such as a National Energy Guarantee.
- Double the original investment in the Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC) by \$10 billion to support new generation and storage, concessional loans for household purchases of solar and battery systems, commercial community renewables projects and the transformation and growth of new and existing industries.
- Futureproof our energy networks by creating a \$5 billion independent Energy Security and Modernisation Fund. This will build and upgrade Australia's energy transmission and distribution systems, including transmission links to Renewable Energy Zones, to unlock the supply of cheaper, cleaner energy.
- Encourage the uptake of household solar and battery systems by setting a target of one million household battery systems by 2025 and providing a \$2,000 rebate for 100,000 households on incomes of less than \$180,000 per year to purchase and install battery systems, as well as low-cost loans for households.
- Establish a Neighbourhood Renewables Program to ensure renters and social housing residents can benefit from cheaper and cleaner renewable energy. Labor will establish community power hubs to support the development of projects in local communities – such as solar gardens on apartment rooftops, community wind farms and energy efficiency upgrades for social housing.

- Develop a Bioenergy Strategy with a \$2 million investment to boost the development of this important industry in Australia. Bioenergy has significant potential to help Australia meet its emission reduction goals and reduce waste, improve energy security and boost regional development.
- Establish the Solar Schools program to cut school electricity bills by allocating up to \$1 billion from our expanded Clean Energy Finance Corporation capital to establish the program - supporting the creation of virtual power plants through virtually linked solar and battery systems installed at schools, to deliver electricity and other services to the electricity system.

Labor's plan will be good for households, good for the economy and good for the environment.

Transport and Infrastructure

In the highly competitive, globalised world of the 21st Century, the price consumers pay, the profit businesses make, the quality of life people enjoy and the export income earned will more than ever depend on the adequacy and quality of a nation's roads, railways, seaports and airports.

With limited taxpayer funds, governments have a responsibility to target the investment they make into transport projects that will deliver the greatest social, economic and environmental benefits for our community.

Decisions should be made in the national interest.

That's why, back in 2008, the former Federal Labor Government created Infrastructure Australia to provide independent advice on projects and broader reform priorities, and to separate the short term electoral cycle from the much longer investment cycle.

Such an objective, evidence-based approach to assessing our nation's immediate and long term infrastructure needs is critical to driving long-term economic growth, building inclusive communities, unleashing the growth and export potential of our regions, and transiting to a low carbon future.

And while it is true that the current Coalition Government retained Infrastructure Australia, it is also fair to say that it has been effectively sidelined. Indeed, one of their first decisions upon being elected was to ignore the organisation's warnings about worsening urban congestion and withdraw funding from every public transport project not already under construction.

Accordingly, if successful at the coming election, Labor will return Infrastructure Australia to the centre of the government's decision making process – and respect its advice. What's more, we will give it the resources it needs to perform its core functions, including assessing projects and producing a long term infrastructure pipeline.

Waste and Recycling

A Shorten Labor Government will make Australia a world leader in tackling plastic use and boosting recycling – by creating a Recycling and Waste Strategy and investing \$290 million to cut waste to hand on a cleaner Australia for the next generation.

Labor's Recycling and Waste Strategy will include:

- A national ban on plastic products like microbeads and single-use plastic bags from 2021. We will consult with states, territories and industry on how best to do this and create a consistent approach across the country.
- The creation of a National Container Deposit Scheme to incentivise recycling and increase the quality of recyclables. One of the reasons Australia exports so much waste to be recycled overseas is the cost of sorting materials so they can be recycled. States without a scheme will not be forced to participate in the national scheme but will be invited to join.
- Establishing a National Waste Commissioner to work with state and local government and help educate the community on solutions to waste. The Commissioner will also be charged with working with industry on the expansion of schemes for the recycling of products when they are at the end of their use – the Product Stewardship Schemes. There are existing schemes for TVs, computers and mobile phones – the Commissioner will look at the expansion of these schemes to other products which are currently ending up in landfills at alarming rates – including e-waste, batteries, and whitegoods such as microwaves.
- Investing in the domestic recycling industry through a \$60 million National Recycling Fund. This will fund projects to encourage recycling, including funding for innovative waste solutions, local government recycling facilities and material processing facilities, and new approaches to tackling food waste.
- Tackling marine plastics through \$15 million to assist our neighbours clean up the Pacific Ocean.
- Setting targets for government to purchase recycled products. Labor will also ask the Infrastructure Department to investigate whether recycled products can feasibly be used as road base for infrastructure projects.
- Build on our plan to clean up Australia's urban waterways and stop plastics from reaching our oceans through our \$200 million Urban Rivers and Corridors program.

Last year COAG agreed to a set of targets to reduce plastics by 2025 – including that 100 per cent of all Australia's packaging will be reusable, recyclable or compostable by 2025 or earlier. Labor endorses these targets. The Morrison Government has been missing in action on this issue – Labor's plan will provide the national leadership needed to get the country on track to meet our 2025 targets.

Australians want action from government to help reduce waste and build a sustainable, circular economy. While many Australians do their duty – they recycle, compost, use keep cups for their morning coffee – we need the government to take a leading role to tackle some of the big, structural problems.

For too long, the Federal Government has left issues of recycling, plastics and waste to state governments and local governments. And, while local and state governments have generally moved in a positive direction, plastics and waste are now becoming both a national and international problem.

A New Environment Act

Labor has committed to creating an Australian Environment Act and establishing a Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in its first term of government.

We will ensure the Federal Government returns to taking a leadership role in protecting our natural environment.

The current EPBC Act is now 20 years old and has never been significantly reformed. It is time to bring it into the 21st century.

Labor's Environment Act will not only protect our environment, but also support job creating development by streamlining and harmonising processes.

The federal EPA, with a mission to protect Australia's natural environment, will be informed by the best available scientific advice. It will ensure compliance with environmental law and have the ability to conduct public inquiries on important environmental matters.

The new legal framework will compel the Australian Government to actively protect our unique natural environment and demonstrate national leadership.

Labor will establish a high-powered working group of experts including scientists, environmental lawyers and public policy thinkers to hone the important concepts that underpin this reform.

We will also ensure all stakeholders including states and territories, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives, impacted industries and business groups, trade unions and civil society have a seat at the table.

The federal Environment Act will aim to tackle problems identified by industry, who have noted inefficiencies, delays and hurdles in the current law. The new law will protect the environment while also giving business more certainty.

Great Australian Bight

On the issues of drilling in the Great Australian Bight, Labor supports the responsible development of our natural resources subject to strict environmental safeguards.

Decisions about drilling in the Bight, as in all parts of our oceans, must be subject to independent assessment based on the best available science. Any independent assessment of drilling in the Bight will result in some very high hurdles that a project will need to get over.

Labor won't be lowering standards for this project or any others. It is essential that environmental standards are in no way lowered by the Government, even if that results in a proposed project not advancing.

Murray Darling Basin

With regards to the Murray Darling Basin, Australians have watched an ecological disaster as a result of the failure of the Liberals and Nationals to properly implement the Murray Darling Basin Plan or take water reform seriously

Labor is committed to:

- Introducing legislation to repeal the 1,500GL cap on water buybacks.
- Restoring the integrity of the Murray-Darling Basin Authority by moving its compliance functions to the Environmental Protection Agency and ordering a formal review of claims public servants acted unlawfully.
- Requiring the Basin Authority to update the science.
- An urgent review of climate change impacts on the Basin now and into the future to determine any change in inflows and evaporation rates.
- Urgently renegotiating the Menindee agreement, which determines how the lakes are managed and is now decades out of date.

Biodiversity

Bill Shorten recently announced as part of our \$1 billion plan to protect our environment, a \$1 million Native Species Protection Fund – which will seek to both restore numbers of endangered plants and animals and eliminate non-native pests.

The Fund will be established through a \$100 million investment to tackle the most pressing extinction and invasive species issues. Labor will call on all states and territories, business and civil society to join in a national effort to protect our iconic animal and plant species.

Radioactive Waste

On the issues of the process to establish the National Radioactive Waste Management Facility, the Act requires that the government, when assessing sites nominated by property owners, identifies those that best meet the technical, geological, and environmental criteria; has community support, and involves traditional owners.

The question of where to establish a permanent low level National Radioactive Waste Management facility (NRWMF) has been an ongoing issue for thirty years, with decades of reports, studies and tests. The best available scientific and technical advice is that a national facility is required for Australia to meet its international obligations to manage our own nuclear waste.

Australians depend on nuclear technology for medicines used in the diagnosis of heart disease, skeletal injuries as well as a range of cancers. The waste from these uses is managed at 100 locations around Australia including hospitals, industrial sites, mines and at Australia's Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) in suburban Sydney, where the national regulator has made it clear that permanently leaving the waste at Lucas Heights is unsustainable.

Subject to a decision by the courts, the government plans to decide on whether to proceed on one of the nominated sites shortly. Any decision to proceed with a preferred site would require licences and approvals under other Commonwealth legislation, such as the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 and the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Act 1998.

As you can see, Labor is absolutely committed to tackling climate change and protecting our environment. Labor will pay for these commitments by making multinationals pay their fair share and closing tax loopholes used by the top end of town.

You can read more about our plans and stay up to date with future announcements at:

<https://www.alp.org.au/policies/>

Thank you again for your email.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marielle Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marielle Smith
Senate Candidate for South Australia