

Expands on a SLACC March 2013 Newsletter article:

Your last chance for a 2030 clean energy target for the Energy Bill, and to deter Osborne's "dash for gas":

MPs **Tim Yeo** (Con.) and **Barry Gardiner** (Lab.) have tabled an amendment for the Energy Bill to set a 2030 decarbonisation target for electricity generation by April 2014, and more in line with Committee on Climate Change recommendations (50gCO₂/KWh) (Yeo is Chairman of the Select Committee on Energy and Climate Change, and Gardiner represents Labour climate policy). In their last conference, the LibDems voted in favour of a 2030 decarb target in the Energy Bill, and since then LibDems have helped in government to obtain a good amount of money budgeted towards investment in what such a target would promote. However, Ed Davey and Nick Clegg have not managed to persuade Osborne to agree to including this target within the Energy Bill - and agreed to defer a decision on having a target until 2016 - which is not just inadequate for green investment-certainty but is also very risky (not just the threat of a "dash for gas" but also to actually having an effective target should the Tories win a majority in the next election with increased powers to Osborne and thus to fossil fuel interests).

Tim Farron on 20th February wrote in response to a SLACC member's email: "Thanks for the reminder and I want to assure you that I have written to the Minister in support of the Tim Yeo amendments, wanting to maintain the pressure as best I can." This is good news - but supporting the amendment is not the same as voting for it - because it is likely that Clegg and Davey may/will(?) impose a whip to get LibDem MPs to vote against the amendment and instead support the inadequate compromise with Osborne despite it being against LibDem party policy!

I would urge you therefore to write to Tim (tim@timfarron.co.uk) to urge him of the importance of voting for the amendment he supports - even if this means going against a whip. You could begin by writing that you are very pleased that he supports the amendment. You could also write that a whip would be wrong in this instance as it would go against LibDem policy as decided in their conference (as well as huge support from industry and green NGOs) - and if Tim as LibDem President can have influence here that would be great.

To make things easy for you - there are template email letters on the internet - which also strongly state why the target is needed as soon as possible:

Greenpeace: <http://www.greenpeace.org.uk/battleforbritain>

FoE: http://www.foe.co.uk/what_we_do/clean_british_energy_clean_power_action_39060.html

38degrees: <https://secure.38degrees.org.uk/page/speakout/energy-bill-email-your-mp>

Good Energy: <http://www.goodenergy.co.uk/blog/articles/2013/02/12/time-to-act-on-decarbonisation-target>

By when? The vote in parliament is likely to be in March. Though I've read the date as 26th March I haven't yet seen an entry for this day on the Parliamentary Calendar:

<http://services.parliament.uk/calendar/#!/calendar/Commons/MainChamber/2013/3/26/events.html>

The importance of a 2030 target ASAP

The lack of a 2030 target would not just mean continued uncertainty for green energy investment but also an unrestrained "dash for gas" - and fracking.

For more reasons see next page.

Further info:

FoE: 'Companies, charities, unions and faith groups calling for a clean power target'

http://www.foe.co.uk/news/larking_with_government_39217.html

Breaking Bipartisan Energy Bill decarbonisation amendment tabled - 08 Feb 2013 - News from BusinessGreen

<http://www.businessgreen.com/bg/news/2242562/breaking-bipartisan-energy-bill-decarbonisation-amendment-tabled>

'Businesses line up to back decarbonisation target' - 20 Feb 2013 - News from BusinessGreen

<http://www.businessgreen.com/bg/news/2249320/businesses-line-up-to-back-decarbonisation-target>

Why do we need a 2030 clean energy target? and asap?

Obviously we would prefer wind turbines to fracking rigs and Osborne's blinkered "dash for gas".

Here are reasons more fully (mostly collated from the internet):

"If the Energy Bill does not set a target to largely decarbonise the electricity sector by 2030, then the UK may miss one of the biggest opportunities it has **to create a low-carbon economy in the most cost effective way.**" - Chairman of Energy and Climate Change Committee (via GreenLibDem report on Energy Bill).

Chairman of CCC (Commission on Climate Change) Lord Deben here writes on 25feb13 to Ed Davey, SoS for DECC, strongly urging no delay for setting the 2030 carbon-intensity target [for cleaner energy production], so as to avoid a drop in confidence for investment into low carbon energy production such as off-shore wind turbines, and states that: **"Early decarbonisation is economically sensible compared to the alternative of a dash for gas through the 2020s":**

http://hmccc.s3.amazonaws.com/Ed_Davey_February13_final.pdf

"Now's the chance to take a giant step to tackle climate change" - FoE

"It would give businesses the certainty they need to invest in clean energy and lead to thousands of new green jobs." - FoE

There is a wide support for the target: it "is backed by hundreds of businesses, investors and civil society groups" - Greenpeace.

"A clean power target is supported by hundreds of investors, businesses, and charities and now a growing number of MPs are joining the call." - FoE

"Tim Yeo & Barry Gardiner's 'green jobs amendment' would put the UK at the heart of the green energy revolution, and generate thousands of much needed jobs in design, manufacturing and installation," - FoE

To encourage manufacturers of eg wind turbines to set up to make components here in UK rather than imported.

"make us world leaders in renewable energy technology" - FoE

Economic benefits:

"The case for decarb target further strengthened when DECC released an update to its impact assessment for the Energy Bill that suggested the greatest economic benefits, £5.5bn in total, would come from a decarbonisation pathway that delivered power at an average of 50g/KWh by 2030." - Business Green, and: "Needs to precede auctions for financial support for energy generators (part of Energy Bill's "capacity mechanism" - which could over-support gas-fired power stations without a target to limit this.

"Stop the Big Six energy companies building a generation of new, dirty, gas power stations" - FoE

An opportunity for LibDems to honour their recent party conference pledge to support a decarbonisation target

Needs to precede general election as would be threatened if a Tory majority with increased power to Osborne and fossil fuel interests.