

ENERGY BILL & 2030 clean energy target: - the vote on Tuesday on the Yeo-Gardiner amendments

From: [Henry Adams](#)

Sent: Monday, June 03, 2013 6:12 PM

To: [John Pugh MP](#)

Cc: [Tim Farron](#) ; [Mia Hadfield-Spoor greenlibdems vc](#) ; [Simon Oliver greenlibdems vice-chair](#) ; [Steve Bradley greenlibdems chair](#)

Subject: ENERGY BILL & 2030 clean energy target: - the vote on Tuesday on the Yeo-Gardiner amendments

Hi John,

I am a long-standing LibDem voter who has invested much time and thought on the need for a **2030 decarbonisation target for the Energy Bill** – and would appreciate if you read my response to the points you made to your constituent(s) on this subject (appended). I plan to publish and widely distribute both these emails.

I am hoping you have an urgent re-think of this matter and join Tim Farron, Andrew George, Martin Horwood, Julian Huppert and other LibDem MPs with conscience, to vote FOR inclusion of the Yeo-Gardiner amendments in the Energy Bill on Tuesday. (Tim is very aware of my concerns on this issue and I am copying this to him).

If the 2030 target loses the vote – it is likely that LibDem MPs – as holders of ‘the balance of power’ here – will deservedly face the full brunt of blame for the energy trajectory being set for Osborne’s unabated dash for gas option instead of the trajectory towards low carbon clean green energy and energy efficiency. The many companies and NGOs who support the target will be truly sickened by this result – and the LibDem party will be vilified despite its members and supporters being for the target. No-one is forcing you to vote against the amendments. Ultimately it will be your choice and you will have to live up to the consequences. It will be no defence blaming the Tories or Ed Davey’s compromise with Osborne.

I agree with your first sentence but would like to add the word ‘NOW’ as such: ‘... challenges facing us now and in the coming decades.’ – to emphasize the *immediacy* of these challenges, and that the decision point is NOW – on Tuesday. This is because the Energy Bill as it now stands puts off the decision as to whether to have a target until 2016 after the next election. Thus if Osborne and Cameron head Government after the next election – Osborne can and will quash the target altogether – meaning there won’t be another chance to set this target until near to 2020.

You call 2016 a “major concession” – but as I’ve pointed out – it is a *worthless* concession if Osborne has full power in 2015.

Coalition politics does need some compromises – but there are some issues such as this one – which are of such major importance that they are above the need to maintain a minimum degree of coalition stability.

You imply that voting for the Yeo amendment would risk losing the positive aspects and low carbon financial support that LibDems have fought for. However, if the vote puts the target into the Energy Bill, the other low carbon aspects would have to remain in to make the target achievable!

Although Ed Davey said he wanted the 2030 target sooner rather than later he has unfortunately made the mistake of too rigidly agreeing with Osborne for the compromise of putting off the decision until 2016. That was his decision. You are not being *forced* to vote against the Yeo amendments. Ed Davey has brought the matter forward to a point. But it’s up to LibDem MPs to grab the baton and reach the next stage forwards.

Although Ed Davey has gained money etc to support renewable energy, wind turbines and other clean green renewable forms of energy do nothing directly and intrinsically to reduce carbon emissions. They only do so indirectly if they serve to reduce emissions from fossil fuel alternatives by replacement – but this is not inevitable as energy production is not a zero sum game as other major factors as demand, consumption and efficiency are also involved. Thus the 2030 decarb target is necessary – to ensure that fossil alternatives are correspondingly reduced. Without the target, fossil fuelled energy is likely to increase as well as clean renewables, and could be allowed to displace the latter if the ‘playing field’ is inappropriate. Hardly surprising that wind companies and investors find the lack of the target a risky and uncertain scenario.

By voting against the amendment you will be partly responsible for all the extra emissions that result in comparison with the 2030 target option, and that means sharing the responsibility for all the climate change hardships and inevitably the extra deaths that result.

It is thus also a matter of conscience. Ask yourself – what does your conscience tell you?

So please think again – and join the LibDem MPs who will be congratulated rather than (I’ll leave that to your prediction),

Yours sincerely,

Henry Adams

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----- Original Message -----

From: "PUGH, John" <john.pugh.mp@parliament.uk>

To: "Graham Bentley"

Sent: Monday, May 20, 2013 5:21 PM

Subject: RE: Back a clean power target in the Energy Bill

Thanks for your e-mail, Graham.

I very much understand the benefits of having a decarbonisation target within the Energy Bill itself and I agree that the transition to a low-carbon economy is one of the most significant challenges facing us in the coming decades. Coalition politics however, makes compromise the order of the day. Many of my Lib Dem colleagues have argued for setting a target now but our Conservative partners are blocking such a target. Supporting the Tim Yeo amendment however, would place us at risk of jeopardising all other aspects of the energy agreement. If supporters of setting a decarbonisation target were able to convince Conservative members of the government to change their mind then, of course, the situation would be different.

It is important to remember however, that the Bill provides powers for a 2030 decarbonisation target to be set in 2016, by whoever the government at that point. That itself is a major concession. The Energy Bill, as it currently stands, is an enabling piece of legislation. It will make the UK less reliant on fossil fuels and will encourage a massive investment in renewables and other forms of low-carbon energy.

You've mentioned green jobs, boosting the economy and protecting the environment. With around one-fifth of our electricity generating capacity due to close over the next decade, the Energy Bill presents the UK with a tremendous opportunity for delivering green jobs and growth, and to attract the £110 billion of investment needed to make up for our potential energy shortfall. The Bill will ensure that by 2020 there will be a trebling of support each year for cleaner, low carbon energy.

So, in order to guarantee that all of the other positive aspects of the Energy Bill could become law alongside the financial support for low carbon generation, it was necessary to forego the possibility of setting a decarbonisation target now.

I hope this helps somewhat in explaining why the decarbonisation target is a slightly complicated issue for us at present.

All the best,

John