

Tim Farron MP's public position on 2030 decarbonisation target for the Energy Bill

(as written in emails to his constituents in mid-March 2013)

Dear [constituent]

Thank you very much for your recent email with regard to my position on the need to amend the Energy Bill and the Greenpeace campaign to overcome opposition to the inclusion in the Bill of the decarbonisation target for 2030.

I have been contacted by a very large number of constituents about this amendment. The need to tackle climate change is urgent and this issue is too important to be used as some kind of political football. I am fully committed to this principle and I can assure you that rigorous efforts are being made to secure this amendment within the Government. The resistance to the amendment comes from the Chancellor and the Treasury, as has been identified by the Greenpeace posters, whereas our Energy Secretary would wish to see the amendment adopted. It is very clear that support for a decarbonisation target is widespread. Indeed, this issue was voted on at the Liberal Democrat Autumn Conference and delegates voted strongly in favour of the introduction of a target, resulting in this becoming our party policy. It is a great disappointment to me that the Conservatives have so far blocked this from becoming law.

I strongly believe that a decarbonisation target should be included in the Bill because we need to make a firm commitment to tackling climate change. Furthermore I believe that a legally-binding target will help to secure confidence and investment in low carbon projects, which will serve to strengthen our green economy. However I am advised that it may not be helpful to our bargaining position, if the President of the Liberal Democrats were to distract attention from the efforts of our Ministers by signing the Greenpeace pledge. I hope that you will understand that this is intended to enhance the chances of winning Treasury acceptance of the need for the amendment to be adopted. If the negotiations were to fail, I will certainly be voting for the Tim Yeo amendments, when the Energy Bill comes before the House.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

TIM FARRON MP