Minister for the Environment PO Box 6022 Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600

10 February 2017

Dear Mr Frydenberg

I am writing to inform you of my decision to resign as a Member of the Climate Change Authority, effective immediately.

The Government's recently announced interest in supporting, and even subsidizing, the construction of a number of new coal-fired power plants can only mean that the Coalition Government has abandoned all pretence of taking global warming seriously. That the Prime Minister should make such an announcement after we'd learned that 2016 was the hottest year on record globally was perverse, to say the least.

The so-called highly efficient coal-fired power plants the Government now says it supports could reduce emissions by at best 20 per cent compared to the existing ones. Building 10 of them would be equivalent to building eight of the old ones, or building 10 old ones and retiring them after 40 years instead of 50.

If new coal-fired power plants were built, it would make the Government's already weak 2030 reduction target unattainable. Deeper cuts in the subsequent decades, essential to limit the worst impacts of warming, would be off the table.

No government remotely concerned about the impacts of a warming globe on the health, lives and wellbeing of Australians could even consider such a path. You and the Prime Minister are in effect saying to the world that Australia's share of the burden of limiting warming to 2°C must now be carried by other countries, including poor ones. This is unconscionable.

And no government that describes the dirtiest form of electricity using the deeply dishonest term 'clean coal', invented by a PR company for the coal industry, can be believed when it says it wants to reduce Australia's emissions.

Your dismissive reaction to the Climate Change Authority's 2016 report arising from its special review makes it crystal clear that the Government has no interest in sensible climate change policy. The Prime Minister's rejection of the report is all the more disturbing given that it was prepared and put to him by his own appointees.

Yours sincerely

Clive Hamilton

Professor of Public Ethics

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Charles Sturt University