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TITLE: *Come clean on your climate stance, Prime Minister*

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Dear Prime Minister,

You've told us that you want a country where politicians say what they mean and do what they say. You famously called **climate science 'crap'**, but after being elected to the leadership of the Liberal Party, you announced that in fact you agree with the science. Before the last election you **said**:

"I think that climate change is real, humanity makes a contribution. It's important to take strong and effective action against it."

But your recent actions suggest you're not being straight with the Australian people.

You have announced that the review of the Renewable Energy Target (RET) will be headed by Dick Warburton, a man who is not even **convinced** that carbon dioxide is the cause of climate change. And instead of putting climate change at the centre of the RET review, you have focused on electricity prices.

You recently **claimed** that the RET "is causing pretty significant price pressure in the system" which is strange since almost all the price pressures are coming from electricity distribution, the so-called poles and wires, and only about **three per cent** is coming from the RET.

You have not wanted to talk at all about the RET's role in reducing emissions. The RET of course is the second most successful policy at reducing Australia's emissions. It has reduced greenhouse gas emissions by **22.5 million tonnes**. The only policy to have done more is the carbon price, which, along with the Carbon Farming Initiative, has reduced emissions by **39 million tonnes**, according to your government.

How does watering down or getting rid of Australia's two most successful climate change policies count as "strong and effective action" on climate change?

But maybe I'm being too quick to judge? Maybe you have a far better scheme waiting in the wings? A scheme capable of reducing Australia's emissions by an amount that the climate science says we need in order to avoid dangerous climate change? Climate science you claim to agree with?

Your replacement policy is the Direct Action plan. This is a scheme that will struggle to meet an inadequate 5 per cent target and has no chance of achieving a reduction of 25 to 40 per cent, the amount that is needed, according to the science you claim to agree with.

Your Direct Action plan has been analysed and found to be **expensive**, unlikely to **achieve** the target and you have been unable to find an economist who will **back it**. But the most stinging criticism probably came from your colleague Malcolm Turnbull, who does agree with the science on climate change, who **described** the Direct Action plan as a "recipe for fiscal recklessness on a grand scale".

But your attack on any government response to climate change does not stop there. You are trying to get rid of all kinds of policies aimed at reducing Australia's emissions.

You want to **axe** the Clean Energy Finance Corporation which would finance low emission forms of energy.

You **got rid of** the Climate Change Commission that gave independent advice on climate science.

You didn't **send a minister** to the most recent United Nations climate change negotiations in Warsaw.

You are pushing ahead with a **review** on the health impacts of wind farms, despite Australian and international studies finding no link between wind farms and adverse health effects.

You have effectively **ditched** the 5 per cent emissions reduction target by saying that the emissions reduction fund is capped and if it does not achieve the target no more money will be spent.

You even cut funding to the Howard-era mandatory efficiency program.

Again and again you have shown you're not interested in tackling climate change. These are not the actions of someone who agrees with climate science. They are not the actions of someone who wants to take strong and effective action against it.

Prime Minister, you made trust and honesty an important theme of the recent election campaign. You said, "You could trust us in opposition and you will be able to trust us in government."

So why continue to say one thing but do another?

When it comes to climate change, it's time to be open and honest with the Australian people and tell us what you really think. Otherwise our only choice will be to judge you on your actions.

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