

The Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development  
Sixth Floor, 131 Queen Street  
House of Commons  
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6  
Canada  
(via email: [ENVI@parl.gc.ca](mailto:ENVI@parl.gc.ca) with cc to all committee members)

January 26, 2021

Dear Committee Members,

We are an ad hoc grassroots coalition of Canadian youth, health professionals, and parents who have joined together to ask for concrete action from the Canadian Government in response to the climate crisis. We are asking for improvements to Bill C-12, the Canadian Net Zero Emissions Accountability Act, because, while we recognise it has merits in its current iteration, it is inadequate in terms of Canada's responsibility to address the climate crisis.

As high school students, our generation will be the most severely impacted by a lack of government action to stop the climate crisis today. For almost two years we have striked from school and flooded the streets in the millions holding our government to account and demanding bold climate action at the scale required to prevent catastrophe. We are children. We shouldn't have to do this. It's well past time for the government to start truly holding themselves accountable by strengthening Bill C12, and to start tackling the largest crisis humanity has ever faced before it's too late.

As health professionals, we stand with the World Health Organization statement that climate change "is the greatest health threat of the 21st century". Having been on the front lines of the Covid-19 pandemic, we do not endorse this position lightly. By following the science we truly understand that we are on the edge of an irreversible situation which will impact the health and lives of our patients and communities. We are compelled to push for meaningful action in the hopes of preventing the catastrophic predictions made by climate science.

As parents, we know we must do everything in our power to protect our children's right to a healthy future and a stable climate. Our role is to keep them safe and to act as moral agents. The climate crisis is the biggest existential threat to our children, future family generations and our planet. Already, our children are living in a time of unprecedented biodiversity loss and have begun experiencing environmental disasters caused by climate change. It is the youngest amongst us and those not yet born who will bear the brunt of our choices of today. We do not want our children to grow up in a time of unprecedented suffering and loss of life, including human life.

Our groups are uniting to recommend bold changes to strengthen Bill C-12. Together we ask the ENVI committee to\*:

1. Set 2025 as the first milestone year.
2. Ensure all greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets are legally binding.
3. Increase the 2030 national greenhouse gas emissions reduction target to 55% of the 1990 level.
4. Set 2040 as the national greenhouse gas emissions target for net zero.
5. Establish three-year carbon budgets and reports, with independent oversight, and consequences for overshooting budgets.
6. Require mandatory annual progress reports on Canada's greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets to inform planning and help Canadians adapt to a changing climate.

7. Include within the Minister's assessment reports every five years, reporting on climate risks and impacts that can inform policy and carbon budgets.
8. Ensure that the advisory committee is composed of independent climate experts, including Indigenous, youth, and worker representation, and advises on targets, gaps, emission reduction plans, impacts, and adaptation.
9. Establish a Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change to work alongside the advisory committee.

**\*See Appendix 1 for detail on each request**

We ask that the committee institutes these amendments to strengthen the Bill and to act across political lines to ensure that it is passed without delay.

As our coalition represents three groups which will be directly impacted by the climate crisis, we respectfully ask you to consider including us as a witness to the ENVI committee when it reviews the bill.

Sincerely,

Members of the West Coast Coalition on the Climate Crisis

Dr. Rashmi Chadha, Physician, Vancouver, BC  
Dr. Kelly Lau, Physician, Vancouver, BC  
Jennifer Moreau, New Westminster, BC, Babies for Climate Action  
Dr. Anna Morgan, Veterinarian, Port Moody, BC, Babies for Climate Action  
Celine Lopez, New Westminster, BC, Babies for Climate Action  
Jinhwa Hwong-Ambrose, Vancouver, BC, For Our Kids  
Helen Brown, Librarian, Vancouver, BC, For Our Kids  
Dr. Kevin Liang, Resident Physician, Vancouver, BC  
Laurel Hart, Ph.D., Babies for Climate Action Vancouver, BC  
Dr Linda Thyer, Physician, Vancouver, BC  
Lilah Williamson, Burnaby, BC, Sustainabiliteens  
Kiran Niet, Burnaby, BC, Sustainabiliteens  
Juno Avila-Clark, New Westminster, BC, Sustainabiliteens  
Naiha Kaba, Vancouver, BC, Sustainabiliteens  
Aija Tso, Vancouver, BC, Sustainabiliteens  
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Maiya Gurbin, Vancouver, BC, Sustainabiliteens  
Tavie Johnson, North Vancouver, BC, Sustainabiliteens  
Naomi Leung, Richmond, BC, Sustainabiliteens  
Sonya Chatterjee, Surrey, BC, Sustainabiliteens  
Anica Lee, Vancouver, BC, Sustainabiliteens  
Amber Leung, Coquitlam, BC, Sustainabiliteens  
Natasha Ivkov, Surrey, BC, Sustainabiliteens  
Rowan Crewe, New Westminster, BC, Sustainabiliteens  
Kaitlin Hong, Vancouver, BC, Sustainabiliteens  
Dr. Neil Chadha, Physician, Vancouver, BC

Dr. Matei Stoian, Resident Physician, Vancouver, BC  
 Dr. Robert Winston, Retired Physician, Surrey, BC  
 Holden Bonwit, MBA and Engineer, Parent, Squamish, BC  
 Elaine Su, New Westminster, BC, Babies for Climate Action  
 Tasha Henderson, MA Planning, New Westminster, BC, Babies for Climate Action  
 Meaghen Taylor-Reid, MA Leadership, New Westminster, BC, Babies for Climate Action  
 Dr. Mary-Wynne Ashford, Retired Physician, Victoria, BC  
 Sara Langlois, Parent and Teacher, BC  
 Marian Hakze, North Vancouver, BC, For Our Kids Northshore, BC  
 Dr. Lucila Nerenberg, Physician, Victoria, BC  
 Dr. Emma Preston, Physician, Vancouver, BC  
 Dr. Margaret McGregor, Physician, Vancouver, BC  
 Dr. Jennifer Whyte, Physician, Port Alberni, BC  
 Dr. RD Nicoll, Physician, Victoria, BC  
 Dr. Christy Sutherland, Physician, Vancouver, BC  
 Rosemary Cooke, Pediatric RN, Babies for Climate Action, Vancouver, BC  
 Dr. Janet Ray, Physician, Victoria, BC  
 Dr. Stephanie von Dehn, Physician, Galiano Island, BC

## Appendix 1

1. Set 2025 as the first milestone year to start the emissions reduction plan. An early start will reduce the burden of more intensive and possibly prohibitive actions that will be required should the plan's start be delayed until 2030. Acting early will increase predictability and transparency, and ensure Canada's efforts are on track to meet future milestones. Waiting for 9 years to start is too late if we want to prevent catastrophic climate change.
2. Ensure all greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets are legally binding. To meet Canada's responsibilities to limit global heating to 1.5 C and address the climate emergency that threatens all of society, we need legally binding targets. These targets will ensure the burden of reductions is spread over time and provide certainty and opportunities for planning.
3. Increase the 2030 reduction target to 55% of the 1990 level; this request is in-line with the European Union's target, announced in 2020.<sup>1</sup> Making this change would demonstrate to the world that Canada is serious about addressing the climate crisis and is keeping in-step with equivalent economies in terms of accepting responsibility and acting on it.
4. Set 2040 as the national greenhouse gas emissions target for net zero. Canada has a notable responsibility because it produces the most greenhouse gases per capita in the G20. Canadians use four times the G20 average in buildings and transportation sectors. Therefore Canada has a much higher responsibility to make steeper reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. This earlier commitment of net zero by 2040 would allow for emerging economies to effectively catch up in terms of developing sustainably, which would demonstrate that Canada has a commitment to climate justice.
5. Establish three-year carbon budgets and reports, with independent oversight, and consequences for overshooting budgets. Carbon budgets allow for planning across government using oversight and

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/eu-climate-action/2030\\_ctp\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/eu-climate-action/2030_ctp_en)

accounting structures mirroring existing financial systems. The UK's Climate Change Act is a model of how budgets can lead to meaningful reductions.<sup>2</sup>

6. Require mandatory annual progress reports on Canada's greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets to inform planning and help Canadians adapt to a changing climate. Canadians need transparent reporting that addresses the scale and urgency of the crisis. Canadians want to understand the issues that will affect them, their families, and communities. As time goes on they will see the increasing impacts of the changing climate and publication of a media-publicized report will inform them of the active situation and steps being taken to mitigate further damage.
7. Include within the Minister's assessment reports every five years, reporting on climate risks and impacts that can inform policy and carbon budgets. This additional information is important for future planning and can be followed and adapted by successive governments.
8. Ensure that the advisory committee is composed of independent climate science experts, with Indigenous, youth, and worker representation, and advises on targets, gaps, emission reduction plans, impacts, and adaptation. In order for the advisory body to maintain public trust, it is crucial that it does not represent corporate interests and is free of material conflicts of interest.
9. Establish a Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change to work alongside the advisory panel. The UK and France have already implemented their own assemblies<sup>3</sup> and a global one is planned ahead of COP-26. The assembly would serve as a non-partisan independent body representative of the wider population, asked to provide input to the advisory committee on the bigger questions and decisions that are needed. The assembly would be guided by experts in evidence-based climate science and economic mathematical modelling.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.theccc.org.uk/topic/carbon-budgets/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://carnegieeurope.eu/2020/11/05/getting-climate-citizens-assemblies-right-pub-83133>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.euronews.com/living/2020/09/11/why-are-citizens-assemblies-on-climate-change-necessary->