

**Brief to the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development
on strengthening Bill C-12, the Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act**

May 2021

Introduction

Sustainable Milton is a grassroots, non-profit community organization with a focus on making our Town a healthier, more resilient and ultimately more sustainable community. We aim to achieve this through education, local action, and collaboration with like-minded organizations and local government.

Our aim in submitting our recommendations is solely to enhance the current draft legislation and elevate it to be comparable with the bold, inspiring climate leadership we are seeing emerge from other nations such as the United Kingdom.

We understand that Canada has some unique challenges that must be taken into consideration, but not unlike Canada's WWII efforts, our country requires bold leadership to create solidarity across party lines, across geographical lines and across all community sectors to successfully address the threats of climate change. The current government has acknowledged that Canadians are ready, and in fact are demanding, extensive and bold climate action from our leadership.

This legislation should mandate engagement with the workforce to ensure a just and equitable transition with a "good-jobs" guarantee. It should also incentivize and facilitate provincial governments to implement their own strategies for achieving the Paris Agreement targets in line with Federal legislation.

Bill C-12 is our opportunity to step up and do our part. We have been a significant contributor to this crisis, and now it is time to accept responsibility and do everything we can to be a significant contributor to the solution!

Endorsements

First and foremost, Sustainable Milton would like to strongly endorse and support the submissions from the following organizations:

- Leadnow.ca & 350.org
- Ecojustice & West Coast Environmental Law
- Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment
- Grandmothers Act to Save the Planet

Recommendations

Most, if not all, of our recommendations are well presented in the above submissions, but we would like to summarize the aspects of Bill C-12 that we feel need addressing:

1. 2030 is too late. Canada needs a 2025 target, consistent with best available science and international obligations, ensuring accountability through the next five years.
2. Set a stronger emissions reduction target of at least 50% by 2030, to align with IPCC recommendations. The majority of the work must take place before the end of the decade, as future targets will only get more difficult to achieve.
3. Establish rolling 5-year carbon budgets in line with IPCC science and equity principles.
4. Establish a clear legal duty to achieve set targets that will endure changes of government.
5. Align the accountability cycle with the Paris Agreement's 5-year stocktake process and its goal of ratcheting up ambition.
6. Define robust minimum standards for detailed emissions reduction plans and progress reporting.
7. Create an independent advisory body, with clearly defined and robust roles, that includes climate science experts to help set targets, review, assess, and report on progress, and excludes anyone who has advocated against climate action or spread misinformation.
8. Strengthen the advisory body's role in setting targets.
9. Align the legislation and embed it with the principles of the UN-DRIP (United Nations Declaration to the Rights of Indigenous Peoples).

Conclusion

Bill C-12 should convey the urgency with which the climate crisis must be addressed. We have run out of time to prevent many of the impacts of climate change. It is imperative that the ENVI Standing Committee amend Bill C-12 to ensure that we reduce our emissions as quickly as we possibly can. The choices that we make will not be easy but the discomfort and turmoil is worth securing a sustainable future. The lives of our children and the generations that come after are depending on the actions we take today.

