



## **Submission to**

### **Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development**

#### ***Bill C-12, An Act respecting transparency and accountability in Canada's efforts to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2050***

May 17, 2021

Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL) Canada appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on Bill C-12, *An Act respecting transparency and accountability in Canada's efforts to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2050*.

### **Executive Summary**

CCL Canada recommends that Bill C-12 be amended to maximize its potential to develop and sustain political will for Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions reduction through a legislated process to identify and tackle challenges that arise — through independent oversight, transparent monitoring and reporting, and regular opportunities for course correction.

CCL Canada believes that this goal of political durability can be achieved by having Bill C-12 generate meaningful climate action debate (in Parliament and among the public) through amendments to the Bill which will

- enhance the public's confidence in the Advisory Body proposed in s. 20 of Bill C-12,
- enhance the involvement of the Advisory Body in setting GHG emissions reduction targets and plans to achieve these targets, and
- require annual reporting on progress in achieving these targets.

## **Discussion**

### **Introduction**

- Bill C-12 commits to a significant reduction of GHG emissions by 2050.
- This submission focuses on the political durability of the GHG reduction commitments of Bill C-12 over this 29 year period of time.
- CCL Canada recognizes that, as noted in other submissions to the Committee, additional amendments are necessary to strengthen Bill C-12's framework for achieving net zero GHG emissions by 2050 (including a legislated target for GHG emission reductions by 2025).

### **Necessity of Political Will to Achieve Significant GHG Emissions Reductions**

- Strong climate change legislation does not, by itself, guarantee political durability or that legislated GHG emission reduction targets will be met.
- The effectiveness of such legislation depends on continued political will to act on climate action.
- An important goal for Bill C-12 should therefore be to maximize its potential to develop and sustain political will for GHG emissions reduction through a legislated process to identify and tackle challenges that arise — through independent oversight, transparent monitoring and reporting, and regular opportunities for course correction.

### **Recommendations for Enhancement of Political Durability of Bill C-12**

CCL Canada recommends that the goal of political durability be achieved by having Bill C-12 generate meaningful climate action debate (in Parliament and among the public) through amendments to the Bill which will

- enhance the public's confidence in the Advisory Body,
- enhance the involvement of the Advisory Body in setting GHG emissions reduction targets and plans to achieve these targets, and
- requiring annual reporting on progress in achieving these targets.

### Strengthen public trust in the expertise and independence of the Advisory Body

- The Advisory Body must be expert based (not sectoral based), so that it has the independence (both actual and perceived), and the technical capacity, to credibly advise the government about GHG emissions reductions.
- The Advisory Body must be adequately resourced (financial and staff resources) to carry out its mandate in a manner that inspires public confidence.

#### *Recommendations*

1. Section 21 of Bill C-12 be amended to specify areas of scientific and other expertise which are to be reflected in the Advisory Body's membership.
2. Section 21 of Bill C-12 be amended to provide for specific terms of office for members, and limitations on their removal before the end of their term (essentially removal may only be for cause).
3. Section 21 of Bill C-12 be amended to provide that staff supporting the Advisory Body be under its direction and control.

### Greater Involvement of the Advisory Body in setting milestone GHG emissions reduction targets and establishing plans to achieve these targets

#### *Recommendations*

4. Sections 8, 9, 11 and 13 of Bill C-12 be amended to provide that the government must obtain, and take into account, the advice of the Advisory Body when setting milestone targets, and establishing plans to achieve these and the 2050 net-zero targets (and when amending targets and plans).
5. Sections 8, 9, 11 and 13 of Bill C-12 be amended to provide that, if the government does not accept the advice of the Advisory Body when setting a target or establishing a plan (or amending them), the government must, within a specified period of time, publicly explain the reasons for its decision.

### Require annual reporting of national GHG emissions by the government

#### *Recommendation*

6. Section 14 of Bill C-12 be amended to require the government to publicly report, on an annual basis, national GHG emissions by a specified date in the following calendar year.

Require annual reporting by the Advisory Body on progress in meeting GHG emissions reduction targets and, if relevant, suggest measures necessary to enable achievement of the targets

*Recommendation*

7. Section 22 of Bill C-12 be amended to require the annual reports of the Advisory Body to publicly be publicly issued by a specified date, and provide that the reports must include Canada's progress in meeting its GHG emission reduction targets and, if necessary, to provide advice on measures that will enable Canada to achieve the targets.

Require the government to respond to the Advisory Body's annual progress reports

*Recommendation*

8. Section 22 of Bill C-12 be amended to require the government to respond to all advice included in annual reports of the Advisory Body, within a specified period of time after the report is publicly released.

The above recommendations are consistent with the United Kingdom *Climate Change Act* of 2008.

## **Summary**

- The amendments recommended above would require that, every year (rather than every 5 years), the issue of Canada's progress in meeting its GHG emission reduction targets would be a matter of public debate (in Parliament and the press, and by civil society), based on the report of a respected, independent Advisory Board and the government's response to the report.
- An annual focus on Canada's GHG levels resulting from Bill C-12 should greatly help generate and maintain the political will necessary for effective action on the issue of GHG emissions reduction.

## **About Citizens Climate Lobby Canada**

- CCL Canada is a volunteer-driven and non-partisan organization.
- Since 2010, CCL Canada has been focused on advocating for an incrementally increasing price on carbon pollution with 100% of the revenue returned directly and equitably back to citizens.

- To date, CCL Canada has 42 active chapters covering over 120 ridings across the country, and has met with government officials over 1200 times.
- In May 2019 CCL Canada added lobbying Parliamentarians for climate accountability laws in addition to carbon pricing legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on Bill C-12.

Cathy Orlando  
Citizens Climate Lobby Canada, National Director

Sophia Mathur  
Citizens' Climate Lobby Canada, Fridays For Future Sudbury

Jeffrey Levitt  
Citizens' Climate Lobby Canada

Website <https://canada.citizensclimatelobby.org/>

Email: [canada@citizensclimatelobby.org](mailto:canada@citizensclimatelobby.org)

Twitter [@CitizensLobbyCa](https://twitter.com/CitizensLobbyCa)

Facebook [Citizens Climate Lobby Canada](https://www.facebook.com/CitizensClimateLobbyCanada)

Instagram [@CitizensLobbyCa](https://www.instagram.com/CitizensLobbyCa)