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## Parliament must support Clean Energy Bill to ensure Australia's future: unions

Today's vote on the Clean Energy Future Bill is an important step towards Australia's low carbon future ensuring sustainable industry and jobs creation, say unions.

ACTU President Ged Kearney said if Tony Abbott maintained his stance of opposing the Government's carbon price package he would be voting to putting at risk the future of the Australian steel industry and jobs.

"The task of shifting to a lower pollution future is urgent and if Australia doesn't act now then we will miss out on the jobs and investment opportunities of the future," Ms Kearney said.

"We are concerned that political ambitions have taken over the focus of this the important debate about a price on carbon," Ms Kearney said.

"Scaremongering by the Coalition and from big business is a risk to Australia's environmental and economic future and if the Coalition today stymies the Government's attempt to create real and positive change, we will all pay the price in the future.

"A price on pollution is the most effective way to tackle climate change and if Mr Abbott has Australia's interests at heart then he will vote in support of the Clean Energy Future Bill today."

Ms Kearney said the package of legislation included \$9.2 billion in support for emissions-intensive trade-exposed industries, like steel, aluminum and cement. It also includes a \$300 million Steel Transformation Plan to help the steel industry invest and innovate, and a \$14.5 billion in funding to foster investment and development of new industries and jobs.

"Politicians on all sides of the debate must put Australia's long-term interests ahead of their own short-term political goals," Ms Kearney said.

"As a nation we cannot afford to stick our heads in the sand and pretend climate change will not affect our jobs, our industries or our lives.

"The price of no action will be a loss of jobs in sectors such as agriculture and tourism. However, if we act now we will not only be able support existing jobs across all industries but we will also be helping to ensure the creation of new jobs.

"We support this package that the Government has developed in consultation with unions and industry," Ms Kearney said.

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