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Ref: sm2024079.fg

19 April, 2024

The Committee Secretary
Senate Finance and Public Administration Committees
PO Box 6100
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA ACT 2600
Email: fpa.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Committee Secretary,

Submission to the Senate Finance and Public Legislation Committee inquiry into the *Net Zero Economy Authority Bill 2024*

The Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union (the AMWU) has organised and represented workers in the Australian manufacturing sector for 170 years. Today, the AMWU represents nearly 60,000 members in every Australian city and region. The AMWU has been working with environmental and community organisations to advocate for economic diversification and industrial renewal in legacy coal regions like the Hunter Valley, Central Queensland, south-west Western Australia, and the La Trobe Valley in Victoria.

For too long, environmental sustainability and creating more jobs in the manufacturing and energy production sectors have been seen as incompatible with one another. The Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union (AMWU) rejects this framing. Our union believes that decarbonisation represents an unprecedented opportunity to revive our nation's battered but resilient manufacturing sector.

The AMWU welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the inquiry into *the Net Zero Economy Authority Bill 2024*. As with all major structural shifts in the economy, some workers and regions will be impacted more than others. With the international shift away from fossil fuels, Australia's coal mining and energy production regions will experience significant economic reorganisation. These changes cannot be left to the whims of the market. Instead, ambitious and targeted industry policies are needed to ensure that well-paid, secure jobs are available that utilise and build on workers' existing skill sets and ensure the prosperous futures of their communities.

The NZEA Bill 2024 establishes the necessary framework to achieve an interventionist approach to maximising the benefits of the transition for Australian industry, whilst placing workers and the environment at the centre of this transition.

Thus, the AMWU supports the recommendations outlined by the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) in its submission to this Inquiry. We specifically support the NZEA's role to:

- focus on maximising the benefits and minimising the risks of decarbonisation for workers, communities, and industries, ensuring all workers and communities benefit from the transition to a net zero economy, and that no one is left behind;
- support workers in emissions-intensive industries who are, or will be, affected by Australia's transition to a net zero emissions economy to access new employment, training, skills acquisition, and other supports including funding or grants;
- support investors and companies to engage with opportunities in the net zero transformation and facilitating public and private sector investment in decarbonisation projects, particularly in industrial regions and where there is a clear role for government;
- coordinate across the Australian government to promote consistency and organisation in the design and implementation of net-zero related policies, programs, and plans;
- develop and deliver educational and promotional initiatives for the purpose of promoting public understanding of, and enabling participation in, Australia's transition to a net zero emissions economy; and
- support First Nations persons and communities to participate in, and benefit from, Australia's transition to a net zero emissions economy.

The AMWU welcomes further discussion and collaboration on the decarbonisation of existing industries and the creation of new clean energy industries.

The AMWU thank you for the opportunity to make a submission. If you require any further information, please contact our National Research and Planning Officer, Mark Dean (mark.dean@amwu.org.au) or our Senior National Legal Officer, Kath Presdee (kathryn.presdee@amwu.org.au) in the first instance.

Yours sincerely,

STEVE MURPHY
NATIONAL SECRETARY