

Labor Senators' Dissenting Report

Labor Senators believe that the Great Barrier Reef is one of Australia's – indeed the world's – significant natural wonders, as reflected in its World Heritage Listing. The Reef is one of Australia's greatest natural assets, and a major contributor to Australia's economic prosperity. About 200,000 jobs are directly dependent on a healthy Reef, generating about \$4.3 billion for the Australian economy.

Labor Senators are concerned that the majority report of the committee does not give adequate attention to the issues raised in the many submissions received by the committee. Numerous submitters, including many people who have worked in Indigenous policy and protected area management in Queensland, wrote to the committee expressing concern about the approach being taken in the bill. Labor Senators agree with the discussion of these matters in the dissenting report prepared by Senators Bartlett and Siewert, and endorse the views expressed there. In particular:

- Labor Senators do not support the thrust of paragraph 2.27 of the majority report. In relation to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, it is critically important that the views of Indigenous communities are listened to and taken into account.
- Labor Senators support the retention of specific representation from the Indigenous community on the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.

Labor Senators are also concerned that the current bill is not designed to address some of the most significant issues facing the Great Barrier Reef today:

- Labor Senators remain deeply concerned about the impact of climate change on the Great Barrier Reef.
- A 3 degree rise in temperature would see the destruction of the Great Barrier Reef, with 97 per cent of the Reef suffering coral bleaching.
- There is an urgent need for a national climate change strategy, which cuts Australia's greenhouse emissions by 60 per cent by 2050, and includes an action plan to help protect the Great Barrier Reef from dangerous climate change.
- Labor Senators remain committed to banning oil drilling and exploration on the Great Barrier Reef.

Labor Senators will be moving amendments to the bill, and cannot support a majority report that we believe does not effectively confront the issues raised in evidence to the committee.

Senator Kate Lundy
ALP, Australian Capital Territory

Senator Ruth Webber
ALP, Western Australia

Senator Dana Wortley
ALP, South Australia

Senator Jan McLucas
ALP, Queensland