

# Canada praises Tony Abbott's carbon tax repeal bill, says it sends important message

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Prime Minister Tony Abbott introduces the Carbon Tax Repeal Bill on the floor of the House of Representatives today. Picture: Gary Ramage Source: TheAustralian

**TONY Abbott's move to axe the carbon tax has been applauded by Canada's Harper government, which rejected a similar policy in 2008.**

The Prime Minister today fulfilled his pledge to introduce his carbon tax repeal bill into the House of Representatives as his first item of parliamentary business.

Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Parliamentary Secretary Paul Calandra said Mr Abbott had set a strong example on how to reduce carbon emissions while protecting consumers.

"The Australian Prime Minister's decision will be noticed around the world and sends an important message," Mr Calandra said in a statement.

"Our government knows that carbon taxes raise the price of everything, including gas, groceries, and electricity."

Mr Harper is one of Mr Abbott's strongest international allies when it comes to his position on climate change.

Like Mr Abbott, he won an emphatic election victory based on his rejection of a carbon tax, resisting an opposition push raise the price of coal, natural gas, petrol and home heating fuels.

Mr Calandra said the Canadian government had reduced greenhouse gas emissions while protecting jobs.

"Greenhouse gas emissions are down since 2006, and we've created one million net new jobs since the recession and we have done this without penalising Canadian families with a carbon tax," he said.

Mr Abbott said the 2013 election was a referendum on the carbon tax, and the Australian people had spoken.

"This bill delivers on the coalition's commitment to the Australian people to scrap the toxic tax," he told parliament.

"This is our bill to reduce your bills, to reduce the bills of the people of Australia."

Treasurer Joe Hockey also introduced a bill into parliament to repeal Labor's mining tax.

"The bill ends a sordid history of poor taxation policy," Mr Hockey told parliament.

"Given that the mining tax has failed to deliver meaningful revenue, the government has had to borrow to pay for the expenditure associated with the mining tax."

Scrapping the mining tax and associated expenditure measure would save the budget \$13.4 billion, the Treasurer said.

Mr Abbott was forced to wait for more than an hour to present his centrepiece bill to the parliament, amid opposition delaying tactics.

Several protesters in the public gallery were also warned about their behaviour as Mr Abbott was on his feet.

Mr Abbott said the carbon tax made it harder for domestic businesses to compete at home and had harmed Australia's competitiveness abroad.

The Prime Minister promised families and pensioners would continue to receive the compensation and tax cuts associated with Labor's carbon pricing scheme, even though it would be gone.

The government insists electricity costs will fall by nine per cent and gas prices by seven per cent once the carbon tax is gone, providing the average household with an annual power bill saving of \$550.

However, power companies say electricity prices should not fall by that much.

The government has the numbers to see the legislation through the lower house, but Labor and the Australian Greens have vowed to block it in the Senate.

They could delay a vote on the legislation until well into next year, by tying up proceedings with Senate inquiries into both the repeal bills and the coalition's alternative climate change policy.

The Greens have already flagged a push for a Senate inquiry into the coalition's so-called direct action plan to reduce emissions through carbon abatement measures.

Debate on the Clean Energy Legislation (Carbon Tax Repeal) Bill 2013 and other related bills was adjourned.

*Additional reporting: AAP*

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SOURCE: <http://www.news.com.au/national/carbon-tax-repeal-bill-is-prime-minister-tony-abbotts-first-item/story-e6frfkp9-1226758826441>