

Background: Bill C-311, the Climate Change Accountability Act

Bill C-311, the Climate Change Accountability Act, goes to a vote on April 1. It is a private member's bill tabled by NDP MP Bruce Hyer. All three opposition parties passed a virtually identical version of this bill (C-377) in June 2008, but it did not receive Senate consideration before the fall 2008 election.

- Bill C-311 proposes national **emission reduction targets** that represent Canada's fair share of the global effort in reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) pollution, based on scientific assessments of what is required to avoid dangerous climate change. The bill would set a 2050 target that is identical to President Obama's. It would also require the Minister of the Environment to establish a credible pathway to achieve that goal, by setting targets for five-year intervals beginning from 2015. Until this target plan is set, Canada's 2020 target would be 25% below the 1990 level.
- Bill C-311 also extends the important **accountability mechanisms** introduced by the *Kyoto Protocol Implementation Act*, a private member's bill championed by Liberal MP Pablo Rodriguez. Like the Kyoto Protocol act, Bill C-311 would require regular reviews of the target plans and the government's policies by both the National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE) and the Office of the Auditor General. These accountability mechanisms will expire in 2012 unless they are extended by Bill C-311.
- Bill C-311 would require the Canadian government to take responsibility for its fair share of the global effort in preventing dangerous climate change, both by adopting science-based targets and by putting in place the accountability mechanisms to ensure they are met. This approach **provides industry with the certainty they need** to plan green investments.
- At this December's **UN climate talks in Copenhagen**, countries have agreed to reach a new global deal to tackle climate change. This treaty would take effect after the first phase of the Kyoto Protocol ends in 2012. The targets in Bill C-311 align with the target range that leading scientists have recommended at those negotiations.
- Passing C-311 in 2009 would send a powerful statement of Canadian climate **leadership** to the world, demonstrating that Canada is prepared to play a responsible part in the global climate fight. This leadership is critical to engaging other major emitters and securing a strong global deal.

- **Economic analysis** by MK Jaccard and Associates shows that Canada could reach the bill's 2020 target while growing the economy by over 20% and adding over a million new jobs. (For the full report, see *Deep Reductions, Strong Growth* at <http://pubs.pembina.org/reports/2020-prelim-full-e.pdf>).
- The vote on April 1st would send this bill to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development for further study and amendment.