The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister
The Hon Dr Jim Chalmers MP, Treasurer
The Hon Chris Bowen MP, Minister for Climate Change and Energy
Senator the Hon Tim Ayres, Minister for Industry and Innovation, Minister for Science
The Hon Madeleine King MP, Minister for Resources
Senator the Hon Murray Watt, Minister for the Environment and Water
The Hon Kristy McBain MP, Minister for Emergency Management
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister & Ministers,

We call on you to end the free ride for fossil fuels.

Fossil fuel corporations are driving up climate pollution and passing the costs onto Australian families, communities and taxpayers.

While mining giants pocket billions in government handouts and big polluters dodge rules designed to hold them accountable, ordinary Australians are left footing the climate damages bill.

Those costs are growing. Australians are collectively paying $30 billion more on insurance than they were 10 years ago.[1] Recent modelling shows the average worker could lose $3500 a year in income, and a typical family's grocery bill could rise by $3000 a year by 2070 as climate change hurts household incomes and pushes up the cost of living.[2]

The average cost of climate-fuelled extreme weather now sits at $1532 per household nationwide.[3] Without further, significant action, government modelling warns that disaster recovery spending could increase by up to 600% by 2090.[4]

Meanwhile, the Federal Budget shows the diesel fuel tax credit is costing taxpayers over $10 billion per year, with the top 18 mining corporations alone claiming $3.36 billion per year, while the average farmer receives just $13,000.[5]

Furthermore, modelling shows that Australia's main industrial pollution law – the Safeguard Mechanism – will fall well short of delivering the climate pollution cuts we need without stronger reform so big polluters start pulling their weight.[6]

Lastly, the Federal Government continues to approve new coal and gas projects that lock in billions of tonnes of climate pollution, and escalating costs and climate harm for decades to come.[7]

We call on the Federal Government to end the fossil fuel free ride, and:

1. **Stop approving new, expanded, and extended coal and gas projects that lock in billions of tonnes of climate pollution and escalating costs for decades to come.** The Federal Government should be protecting Australians from corporate greed that's driving climate harm, and accelerate the shift to cleaner, cheaper, homegrown energy.

2. **Strengthen Australia's key industrial pollution law (the Safeguard Mechanism) so that the biggest industrial polluters are required to genuinely cut their pollution**, rather than use loopholes. Credible reform means tightening offset rules, aligning pollution cuts with Australia's 2035 climate target, and enforcing a stronger baseline decline rate for coal and gas.

3. **Cap the diesel fuel tax handout that big mining corporations are cashing in on.** A $50 million annual cap, for example, would affect only the 18 largest mining corporations cashing in on the scheme. No farmer, tradie or small business would be affected. This would free up billions of dollars that could be used to support Australian communities and industries with switching to cleaner, more secure energy.

The Australians who have signed this petition are calling on the Federal Government to end the fossil fuel free ride and deliver a cleaner, safer future.

Getting our climate and tax laws right is how the Federal Government can protect Australians from corporate profiteering that is fuelling climate disasters and escalating costs.

With urgency,

Alex Engel-Mallon on behalf of the Climate Council and the undersigned
Advocacy Director
Climate Council

References:

1. How climate pollution fuels more destructive cyclones – Climate Council
    a. N.B. $30b inflation adjusted
2. The economic impacts of climate change in NSW – Net Zero Commission
3. Under Pressure: The climate crunch fuelling inflation and hurting Aussie families – Climate Council
4. Scary numbers as government tallies the catastrophic cost of climate delay – Climate Council
5. What is the diesel fuel rebate, and why is the government paying big miners to pollute? – Climate Council
6. Modelling: Fossil fuels and the Safeguard Mechanism – Climate Council
7. The Albanese Government's fossil fuel approvals – Climate Council