Submission on the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill by Basic Income New Zealand

Dear Honourable Members,

In our submission would like to address the effects that mitigation programmes and adaptation to climate change will have on the residents of Aotearoa New Zealand and that the commission takes into consideration the economic consequences and how a Basic Income might mitigate the worst of those consequences.

We do not wish to address the way these will be achieve but would like the committee to be mindful of the deleterious effects that necessary measures will have consequences for ordinary people and especially those in rural areas.

The east coast of the North Island is already being impacted by the conversion of farmland into pine forest leading to a loss of farmers, farm workers and the impact that is having on rural towns, rural schools, and iwi. As the climate crisis worsens these effects will become more widespread.

We do not dispute the science behind the need for reafforestation but wish that the needs of the people being impacted be taken into account by the commission. Climate change mitigation without regard to inequality and other social measures is unjust. This will also apply to other mitigation and adaptation measures.

We recommend that the commission be charged with taking into account the lives that will be impacted by the necessary measures that will be taken as we adjust to a zero carbon economy.

Rural communities would benefit from infrastructure that would ease economic and cultural adaptation. For example, many rural schools have been connected to fibre broadband but nearby residents are still on copper connections. With an improvement in infrastructure a basic income would make education, retraining and job seeking more available along with low-carbon life styles that contribute to a Zero-Carbon New Zealand. However, it will be impossible to predict the changes that must be made in the coming decades and even harder to foresee the implications for New Zealanders lives.

Basic Income New Zealand would like to see studies made to monitor the effects and especially see a trial of a Basic Income to help our people adapt not only to climate change but to the effects of necessary mitigation. A Basic Income would enable recipients to make timely decisions about their future, relocation, re-education etc. in the face of rapidly changing economic and geographic climates.

Andrew Casey
Secretary
Basic Income New Zealand