

Carbon Tax backlash as Oz voters call for Election

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Gillard feels the heat over unmandated Carbon Tax

AUSTRALIANS are demanding Julia Gillard call a fresh election, saying she has no mandate for a carbon tax. With less than a third of all voters now claiming to support the tax, the federal government is facing a nationwide backlash if the issue goes to the polls.

An exclusive Galaxy poll commissioned by The Daily Telegraph has revealed 73 per cent of people claim they will end up worse off under the tax. Just 7 per cent believe they could end up better off in some way.

More fatal for the Prime Minister, however, was the overwhelming support for an election to be called on the issue - confirming widespread anger over her broken election promise not to introduce a carbon tax.

A total of 64 per cent said they wanted a fresh election. Only 24 per cent believed the PM had a mandate.

And in a growing sentiment that the tax would not help solve the climate change problem, 75 per cent believed it would have only a minor impact on the environment - or no impact at all.

The devastating poll results, showing total opposition now at 58 per cent, confirm the government has so far failed to make an effective case for its tax.

They also reflect Liberal Party internal polling showing support for Tony Abbott's campaign to force the government to an early election, despite analysis showing the Coalition's alternative direct action plan would be even more costly.

Galaxy pollster David Briggs said opposition to the tax was entrenched.

"The problem for the government is that most voters believe the personal cost outweighs the environmental benefits," he said. "Such is concern over the carbon tax that the majority of voters believe Julia Gillard should call an early election to seek a mandate for the tax rather than have the legislation passed in this parliament."

The federal government is expected to announce details of the tax within weeks. It will not only set the carbon price - believed to be between \$20 and \$30 per tonne - but also the level of compensation households will receive to offset the cost of living rise that will accompany the tax.

The carbon tax is only planned to be an interim measure before a transition to a market-based price - an emissions trading scheme.

Opponents of the scheme have succeeded in casting fears that the price is likely to rise significantly no matter what is set in the short term. The government has tried to assuage fears by assuring people that lower and middle-income families will be compensated for the associated price rises -

particularly around electricity bills, which could rise by between \$300 and \$500 a year in Sydney. Ms Gillard has said the political fight over climate change policy was "a long game". The poll was conducted between June 1 and 2, based on a national sample of 500 voters.

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Cleaves Alternative News. <http://cleaves.lingama.net/news/story-2537.html>