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## Will Labour support a "Citizens' Convention for a Post-Carbon Ireland"?

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Dermot Lacey <Dermot.Lacey@labour.ie>  
To: "barry.mcmullin@dcu.ie" <barry.mcmullin@dcu.ie>

14 February 2016 at 10:51

Dear Prof Mc Mullin,

Thank you for your message to the Labour Party in relation to t a Citizens Convention for a Post-Carbon Ireland. Joan Burton has asked me to reply.

The Labour Party, in Government, ensured that the coalition did more than any of its predecessors to face up to our responsibility to future generations. We were also the first Irish Government to pass legislation that commits us – in law – to meeting EU targets for reducing carbon emissions and adopting renewable energy.

When Minister Alex White published the Energy White Paper last December, we became the first Irish Government to commit to a zero-carbon energy future for our country. We were also the first Irish Government to pass legislation that commits us – in law – to meeting EU targets for reducing carbon emissions and adopting renewable energy.

The Energy White Paper set out a framework of 90 actions designed to wean our country off fossil fuels over the coming years, while ensuring that the people of Ireland continue to have a secure supply of affordable energy. We intend to replace high carbon fuels like coal and peat with cleaner alternatives like natural gas over the medium-term. And, over time, we will decarbonise our economy and society entirely, replacing fossil fuels with renewables and reducing energy demand through greatly enhanced energy efficiency in our homes, businesses and public spaces. As a result, we will reduce our energy-related carbon emissions by between 80% and 95%, compared to 1990 levels, by 2050 – before moving to generate 100% of our energy needs from clean sources by the end of the century.

Labour, if returned to government, wants to reinstate the constitutional convention during 2017, and provide the convention with more time to consider broad issues in greater detail. I hope that this may provide the opportunity to consider some of the important environmental issues you raise.

We are also committed to establishing a new forum for a Community Energy Engagement and this seems to mirror pretty much your proposals. We know the challenges and opportunities around climate change cannot be met by Government acting alone. Labours White Paper on Energy was based on extensive consultation and we will continue to strengthen the role of citizens in shaping our future. Our aim is to put citizens at the heart of energy policy. We need public engagement and debate on the challenges that arise from our climate commitments. To facilitate this debate, we will establish a National Energy Forum under an Independent Chair. This will bring together citizens and stakeholders to find the best way to deliver a fully green economy.

The full manifesto will be published tomorrow Monday 15<sup>th</sup>.

Hoping this is satisfactory.

Dermot Lacey

[https://www.labour.ie/download/pdf/labour\\_growing\\_the\\_green\\_economy\\_hr\\_new\\_3.pdf](https://www.labour.ie/download/pdf/labour_growing_the_green_economy_hr_new_3.pdf)

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