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WEDNESDAY, 11 JULY 2007

Mr Deputy Speaker took the Chair at 11 a.m.

Prayers.

INQUIRY INTO THE FAIRNESS OF TAX RATES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**Consideration of Report of Finance and Expenditure Committee**

DAISY HUNTER (Waitakere): The Youth Parliament's Finance and Expenditure Committee makes the following recommendations to the Government: that the youth rebate be increased to allow a person under the age of 15 years, or under the age of 18 years and attending a secondary or special school, to earn up to \$5,000 a year, which is \$96 a week, tax free; that an education strategy be implemented that sees the uptake rate by young people of the youth rebate increase to 80 percent; and that the merits of a flat tax rate be looked into, to replace the progressive tax rules.

People under the age of 18 years are subject, mostly, to the same progressive tax rules as others, once a young person's income exceeds \$2,340 per annum. The current effective rates of taxation are: for incomes of up to \$9,500, 15 percent; of \$9,500 to \$38,000, 21 percent; of \$38,000 to \$60,000, 33 percent; and of over \$60,000, 39 percent. The committee was divided over whether these tax rules are fair with regard to taxing under-18-year-olds still at school. Some of us did not consider that it was fair to tax under-18-year-olds at the same rate as over-18-year-olds, given that they are paid less than the minimum wage. Further, many young people undertake part-time employment only to supplement their living costs while attending school, or to save for future costs, including tertiary study. These people are, in the main, also likely to be still relying heavily on their families for support.

It is within this context that some of us could not justify under-18-year-olds being taxed at the same rate as over-18-year-olds. The majority of us, however, did consider it is fair to tax under-18-year-olds at the same rate as over-18-year-olds. One member indicated his abhorrence of tax in general. Other members indicated that they would like to see consideration given to the simpler flat rate of taxation system, as they believe the progressive tax rules to be discriminatory. Another member suggested that to have a different tax rate for under-18-year-olds would be another form of discrimination against young people. We also acknowledge the assistance provided to young people through other policies, such as student loans.

Given the differing views on whether it is fair to tax under-18-year-olds at the same rate as over-18-year-olds, we looked towards the child rebate as the means to find consensus on this matter. We concluded that a name change to the child rebate scheme is applicable, as it is young people and not children who are the recipients of the rebate. After due consideration we decided that it is fair to tax under-18-year-olds at the same rate as over-18-year-olds where they earn over \$5,000 per annum. Given that most young people under the age of 18 years are likely to be still attending school, and that the work they undertake involves babysitting, lawnmowing, and the like, we believe that it is fair to differentiate between the under-18-year-olds earning \$5,000 or less and those earning above that amount.

We consider that such a change to the Government's tax policy could be best achieved by an increase in the child rebate. We also believe that an increase in the child rebate will incentivise young people to stay at school. They will not be unduly penalised for working to supplement their living costs or for saving for tertiary education. We note that for the 2005 tax year, only 49,200 taxpayers claimed the child rebate. The

Inland Revenue Department submitted that figure, but it does not take into account those who earned income but did not file returns to claim the rebate. That is a concern, given that the evidence provided to us by the Inland Revenue Department showed there were 131,490 people under the age of 18 in the same period. Anecdotally, we are aware that many young people do not know how to apply for the child rebate. It is for this reason that we would like to see the Government implement an education strategy that would see the uptake rate by young people for the child rebate increase to 80 percent. We would also like to see the Inland Revenue Department's website made more user-friendly, and people's access to the department's services via the telephone made easier. The Inland Revenue Department stated that according to the 2006 census, 1.167 million people are under the age of 19 years.

Although it may seem relatively straightforward to take the view that it is unfair to tax under-18-year-olds at the same rate as over-18-year-olds, we are mindful of the impact that addressing this disparity would have on other low-income taxpayers, and on the rest of the taxation system in general. We will look forward to seeing the Government's response to our recommendations.

Report tabled.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The report is tabled. Do presenters wish to have a bell at 4 minutes, or at 5 minutes when their speech is finished? Yes, we will have a bell at 4 minutes, which is the warning bell we normally have. We will have a bell at 4 minutes, and that means speakers will have 1 minute left.

INQUIRY INTO THE LEVEL OF OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE IN THE PACIFIC

Consideration of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee

LANA WALTERS (Rotorua): I wish to present the report of the Youth Parliament's Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee on our Inquiry Into the Level of Official Development Assistance in the Pacific.

Why has New Zealand not met the 0.7 percent target for official development assistance? Are we the Pacific Scrooge? The 0.7 percent target was established in the UN in 1970, and it was agreed that all developed countries needed to reach the mark. Initially, no time frame was set to achieve this percentage, but a 2015 deadline was incorporated as part of the Millennium Development Goals. New Zealand agreed to meeting this target by no later 2015, but is currently contributing only 0.3 percent and has committed to reaching 0.35 percent by 2010.

To help us gain understanding, we were given passionate, thought-provoking witness presentations from MP Keith Locke and representatives from NZAID, the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, and the Global Education Centre.

We discussed with one another and our witnesses the consequences of not meeting the 0.7 percent target. New Zealand would face the national shame of not living up to our commitments. We would be letting down those developing countries that desperately need aid. And, not giving required aid to countries in the Pacific would impact on New Zealand directly as their prosperity and stability are important to us. Also, without more aid to these countries, remittances would continue to be a burden on Pacific Islanders in New Zealand.

We debated whether New Zealand should have to fork up the 0.7 percent when we have problems of our own, such as an inadequate health system, and the phrase "charity should start at home" was used. We also talked about the quality of aid and felt that

quality, not only quantity, needed to be taken into account, and we questioned whether a country's assistance to another could be measured through money.

As a committee we agreed that New Zealand needed to reach the 0.7 percent target, but the time frame to meet this was highly deliberated. Some were adamant that we reach the 0.7 percent target by 2015. Others felt that this was a noble goal to aim towards but was possibly unrealistic and could not be promised when the situation New Zealand would be in, in years to come, is unknown. Our committee was definitely alive with conflicting opinions, but at the end of the day compromise was found, especially when it came to opting for the more pleasing word "consistent", rather than the controversial "steady".

The recommendations of the report were as follows. The Government should create a plan setting out any future action to be taken on the issue of official development assistance from the next Budget. This should include specific deadlines for reaching particular milestones towards the 0.7 percent of gross national income by 2015, with consistent annual increases. We recommended that there be a cross-party accord on the issue of overseas development assistance. We support the 2015 deadline, unless the UN deadlines are changed specifically for Millennium Development Goals.

Scrooge was a selfish man who had no love for Christmas, for children, or for anything that even provoked happiness. We truly hope that New Zealand will not be labelled as the Scrooge of the Pacific. Aside from the fact that we have nothing against children or Christmas, we do not wish to be perceived as a selfish country and we should strive to meet the 0.7 percent target by the deadline set for us.

Report tabled.

INQUIRY INTO STUDENT LOAN SYSTEM

Consideration of Report of Government Administration Committee

KYLA-LOUISE WOOD (List): I wish to present the report of the Government Administration Committee on its inquiry into whether the student loan system creates an unfair burden on the next generation. The student loan scheme was established in 1992 to help students meet the costs associated with undertaking tertiary education. It is managed by three Government departments: the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Social Development, and the Inland Revenue Department.

While hearing the evidence we noted that among the OECD countries, New Zealand provides the highest proportion of Government spending on tertiary education to student loans and allowances. The Ministry of Education advised us that because of this high funding, New Zealand has a high participation rate in tertiary education. We were concerned that this high funding level may affect students, as they might have to face high living costs, a low level of scholarships, and high tuition fees in the current system. We noted that some students were motivated by paying fees, but some were not. We also took into consideration that high participation rates could be for reasons other than the student loan scheme, as many jobs in modern society require tertiary qualifications.

We are concerned that the student loan scheme may encourage people to go overseas, discourage homeownership, and cause people to delay having children. We were interested in pre-loan statistics, as they would give us some evidence for comparison. However, the ministry was not confident about its pre-1992 statistics.

StudyLink, a service of the Ministry of Social Development, provides students with evidence and information about tertiary studies. Through a programme called StudyWise, StudyLink contacted 20,000 students to discuss their study options. This was apparently very successful, as students now have an in-depth knowledge of their options. We would like to see StudyWise expanded, as poor financial decisions can be

costly in the long run. We wanted to know whether students were disadvantaged by a lack of access to student allowances. The Ministry of Social Development told us that it makes an effort to inform entitled students. Although this process is relatively simple, some on the committee found that their peers find the process complicated and personal.

We noted that Finland has a free tertiary education system. We believe that this would be more effective in encouraging New Zealand students to take tertiary education. Thus, we inquired into the feasibility of a free education system. We estimated that this would cost \$1 billion a year. This could be done, as the New Zealand Union of Students Association said that the State and Crown are forecast to run a net surplus of \$1.8 billion a year. However, some felt the surplus could be put to better use.

Having considered all the evidence, we think that ideally there should be a free education system in New Zealand. If not, the current system could lead borrowers to inequalities and undesirable outcomes for homeownership and birth rates. Having said this, we understand that the abolition of the student loan scheme could be complicated. We therefore recommend that the Government do it gradually, by first capping tuition fees, then raising the maximum income threshold for student allowances, and, ultimately, making a universal student allowance for everyone. Thank you.

Report tabled.

INQUIRY INTO YOUTH GANG CULTURE IN NEW ZEALAND

Consideration of Report of Social Services Committee

JADE GRAY (List): Gangs and the gang culture are currently prevalent topics in New Zealand's media. Whether or not all gangs and gang members are as widespread and dangerous as is often portrayed, the number of young people joining gangs is cause for concern.

We heard that there are several reasons why young people join gangs. Boredom was given as a major factor. Young people who are not going to school, who do not have a regular job, or who do not have a hobby are often more susceptible to the gang culture. The desire for some source of income and something to do, coupled with a lack of engagement with support services, can accelerate this. Youth gangs and those involved in crime tend to coincide with low socio-economic levels. This is especially prevalent in Counties-Manukau, where police estimate there are approximately 600 youth gang members in the 73 youth gangs.

A lack of a strong family unit, whether it be with one parent or two, and little wider support can see a young person slip easily into the gang culture, which is, in essence, another form of a community. Submitters also talked of a lack of school attendance, a history of abuse of young people, and self-medicating issues as being factors leading to youth gang involvement.

We found the submission from Eugene Ryder particularly compelling. He spoke of his personal experience as a member of Black Power and his involvement in crime from an early age, and stressed the importance of positive role models in encouraging young people away from crime.

The role the media play in gang culture was discussed. Mr Ryder mentioned that despite what is often projected by the media, gangs such as Black Power, the Mongrel Mob, the Tribesmen, and others are not constantly fighting with each other. However, when they do communicate with each other this can be seen as organised criminal activity. Some of us think that the media influence and the reporting of crime and gang culture do not help the situation.

We also consider that American ghetto culture, as portrayed in the entertainment media, may have a negative influence on some young people. We feel that

strengthening communities and having positive role models for young people are important for preventing a life of gang-related offending. The basic unit of society is the family, and although there was some discussion as to whether a one-parent or a two-parent family made a difference, we all agreed that good influences from within the family are paramount.

We consider that schools need to appeal to a wide range of young people, not just those interested in traditional education—for example, academia or sport—so that young people will want to stay in school and stay connected with education. We recommended the introduction of in-school programmes that focus not on demonising gangs but rather on encouraging young people's confidence and self-worth. Such programmes should also provide young people with the skills to build strong relationships with the people around them and enable them to resist negative peer influence, although it would be preferable if this were taught in the family home. When this does not happen, it needs to come from the school. The time to action this is earlier rather than later—primary school will be ideal.

Some of us think that compulsory military service should be reintroduced. Of those members, some thought it should be universal and others thought it should be an alternative sentencing option. We consider that this would provide young people with an opportunity to gain skills as well as provide activity and structure for young people. Some of us oppose the reintroduction of compulsory military service. We consider that this would be undesirable and unethical. We noted that the submitter from Child, Youth and Family told us that boot camp - style programmes do not prevent reoffending, as evidenced by the high reoffending rate among young people who had been sentenced to corrective training when that sentence still existed.

Report tabled.

INQUIRY INTO THERAPEUTIC CLONING OF STEM CELLS

Consideration of Report of Education and Science Committee

RINSKE TACOMA (Rakaia): Stem cells are the building blocks of life for growth, development, and repair in the body. There are two types of stem cells: embryonic and adult. An embryonic stem cell is a cell from a fertilised egg that is created through in-vitro fertilisation. Some embryos are viable and will turn into an individual if inserted into a womb. But others are non viable and will not develop into an individual. Naturally those embryos would have miscarried. The leftover viable embryos are frozen for 10 years, and if no longer required, are then destroyed. These are called surplus embryos. Presently the non-viable embryos can be used for research in New Zealand.

Stem cells from embryos have the greatest potential to become a wide range of other cells. This is an advantage because these stem cells can replace damaged or diseased cells, so can possibly treat diseases such as Parkinson's disease, cancer, diabetes, and many more. Adult stem cells come from tissues in the adult body. However, these stem cells are thought to be not so effective because there is a limit to how many different types of cells they can produce. More research is needed in this area to find out how effective these types of stem cells are. Stem cells can also be therapeutically cloned using unfertilised human eggs. It takes about 100 human eggs to create a single stem cell line.

We accept the use of donated non-viable embryos in stem cell research. There are different viewpoints as to when life begins, including the belief that life begins with the creation of an embryo. One view expressed to us was that there is a difference between choosing to destroy non-viable and viable embryos—as happens after research—and allowing them to die naturally. We do accept this as a moral issue.

Two year-13 girls from a Catholic school came to talk to us about their views on this issue and they really had an impact on our group. They believed that we cannot view the life of a sick person over the life of an embryo; they said that we must have the same amount of respect for an embryo as for every other individual. This statement made our group ponder and we came to the conclusion that we should first let scientists in New Zealand research on adult, surplus, and non-viable embryos. They should explore the limits of those embryos before we reconsider allowing therapeutic cloning.

We accept the need for stem cells to be used in research and for the treatment and cure of medical conditions such as Parkinson's disease and diabetes. We are concerned, however, that in therapeutic cloning embryos can be created specifically for research, and used to grow other cells, and are then destroyed. This is thought by some to be unethical. We agree that there should be controls in New Zealand to regulate research of this nature but note that this still leaves open the possibility of scientists operating outside those controls in the pursuit of non-desirable outcomes. The reproductive cloning of mammals has already taken place, raising the possibility that scientists may wish to pursue reproductive cloning in the future even though this is currently banned in New Zealand. We do not wish to close the door completely to research on stem cells because we are concerned that if stem cell research is not allowed here, scientists in the area will move out of New Zealand. We do not want New Zealand to become a backwater for research.

We are aware of the potential scientific benefits of stem cell research in New Zealand, including therapeutic cloning, but we feel these need to be balanced against the moral, cultural, and spiritual implications that have been raised by its opponents. We agree that stem cell research that does not use therapeutic cloning should be allowed in New Zealand using adult, surplus, and non-viable embryos. Thank you.

Report tabled.

INQUIRY INTO FOCUS OF YOUTH JUSTICE SYSTEM

Consideration of Report of Law and Order Committee

MEGAN MATTHEWS (List): I wish to present the report of the Law and Order Committee on an inquiry into the focus of the youth justice system. Justice is a value that is lacking in our communities, our courts, and our Government. We are constantly informed of the importance of youth, but what is becoming more apparent is the ignorance of age. The New Zealand justice system has a traditional history of enforcing and supporting a naive and sympathetic approach to youth offenders. The law is a paper tiger when it comes to youth.

As youth ourselves, the members of the Law and Order Committee have come to agreement that in fact the current youth justice system is flawed and that reform is necessary, if not vital, in order to secure a safer future for all. We strongly believe that first and foremost, preventive measures should be put in place for at-risk youth, but that if reoffending or serious crimes occur, harsher penalties should be delivered to those convicted, regardless of their age. Shockingly, 70 percent of the crimes committed in communities are committed by youth.

Representatives from Child, Youth and Family, the Ministry of Justice, and the Sensible Sentencing Trust all feel that the rate of youth offences has dropped dramatically since the establishment of the 1989 Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act. The word "stable" was largely used during the inquiries in connection with the youth crime rates. We believe that "stable" is not good enough, and that although the word suggests there has been no increase, it also suggests that there has not been a significant decrease over the last 18 years.

We feel that the Government should offer after-school programmes that are free and available to all, but with at-risk youth taking precedence, and that the promotion of such services as free counselling should be increased. We would also recommend an increase in funding go into education, because although we acknowledge a lack of education cannot dictate our futures, it still remains the strongest method of prevention our country can offer its children. We believe that the environment a child is brought up in can increase the chances of involvement in minor or major crime. The majority of the select committee agrees that children in a hostile, negative, or abusive household should be removed not when absolutely necessary but when the first warning signs arise. We also understand that placing a child in foster care can be damaging, so we recommend a rigid process of research and investigation go into the selection of foster parents.

Through this inquiry process we found that there is indeed an obvious need for the heads of each office concerned with youth to put aside their conflicting views of one another and unite in the form of a board, with one goal only: to come to a compromise and therefore create a youth justice system that acknowledges and understands the long-term effect of crime not only on the offenders but also, and mainly, on the victim, the victim's family, and the community the offender resides in.

If the adults in our Government cannot behave in an appropriate and a civil manner in each other's presence during something that affects this country, they should not be in a position of power and influence.

Youth crime is no longer an issue we can choose to ignore. It is, in fact, fast becoming an epidemic caused by youth who lack structure, respect, ambition, and support. It is the Government's responsibility, but also ours, to act to serve communities and to bring back the true meaning of justice. The youth offenders of today are the future leaders of tomorrow: they will become the mothers, the fathers, and the teachers. Ignorance will be this country's downfall. It is time to act, and it is time to act now.

Report tabled.

INQUIRY INTO THE LEGAL STATUS OF PARTY PILLS

Consideration of Report of Health Committee

NICOLA DUNN (List): The Health Committee for the 2007 Youth Parliament inquired into the status of benzylpiperazine party pills. Party pills are a recreational drug taken to increase a person's alertness, as well as to uplift his or her mood and energy. The main active ingredients in these pills are benzylpiperazine and trifluoromethylphenylpiperazine monohydrochloride. The current status of benzylpiperazine is that it is illegal and party pills are classified as a C1 drug. The Health Committee has come to the conclusion that benzylpiperazine should become legal with strong regulations surrounding party pills.

We have decided on this because, due to little research having been done, there is insufficient evidence proving the long-term effects of this drug. Common short-term effects of party pills include headaches, nausea, and anxiety, but over the last 5 years, 20 million party pills have been sold with no deaths caused by the consumption of these alone, and with only two life-threatening cases ever recorded in New Zealand.

We also found that taking benzylpiperazine does not lead to drug dependence. Although there are a few people who are dependent on benzylpiperazine, they are also dependent on other substances. We were told that alcohol and tobacco are more harmful than benzylpiperazine, and these are both legal, but with restrictions on who can purchase and consume them. The Health Committee recommends to the Government that party pills should be legally available with heavy restrictions on advertising, on the age that people can purchase and use these party pills, and on who can sell the party

pills and where. There should be punishments and penalties for those who do not abide by these regulations.

We have decided that there needs to be more education on party pills at a younger age in schools, similar to the education around alcohol, sex, and other drugs. This would inform people better of the dangers of party pills, such as mixing them with other substances and drugs, and the importance of taking the recommended doses, giving young people a clearer insight into the risks of party pills and giving them the knowledge to make their own decisions about them.

The committee also came to the conclusion that there should be research undertaken to determine the long-term side effects of benzylpiperazine. It is recommended that a levy be placed on the industry to fund this research. This levy should also include the funding for the implementing and enforcement of the regulations and the resources to educate the young people. We believe that having this known, regulated substance is better than having a more harmful, unknown substance, which will not be able to be controlled by the Government, available to the youth of New Zealand. Thank you.

Report tabled.

INQUIRY INTO RETENTION RATES OF UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Consideration of Report of Māori Affairs Committee

JOHN KINGI (List): Tēnā koe, Mr Speaker. Tēnā koutou katoa. How do we improve the retention rates of students in upper secondary school? It is a great honour for me to stand today and report to the House a summary of the findings of the Māori Affairs Committee.

Research shows us that continued participation at secondary school produces young people with improved economic and social outcomes, enabling a better transition into adulthood and an improved ability to contribute to wider economic and social well-being. However, in spite of this, school retention rates have been decreasing rapidly since the 1990s. Of particular concern to the committee was the disparity between Māori and non-Māori retention rates, with 25 percent of Māori leaving upper secondary school with no formal attainment or a maximum of 13 credits at level 1 of the National Certificate of Educational Achievement. Due to the shocking statistics, the committee knew instinctively that something had to be done in order to improve these retention rates. The committee's recommendations are as follows.

Legislation: the committee does not believe that legislative change is the most appropriate course of action, nor the most effective. The proposals placed in front of the committee, of raising the leaving age and/or of having a minimum achievement level, were, we felt, far too blunt. As submitters to the committee stated, such measures would be of little use without a corresponding change in family, community, and social attitudes towards school. We recommend instead that the Government focus on adopting interventions that will improve effective cooperation between teachers, students, and whānau.

Student engagement: it is our belief that improving student engagement at upper secondary school is the key to increasing retention rates. The relevance of current study to later life needs to be made clear to students. The committee felt that for Māori especially, iwi-based scholarships at junior levels that give incentives to students if they stay at school until form 7 were also important. We recommend that the Government should look at offering similar incentives to all New Zealand youth, as well as identifying a wide range of unique strategies to develop an appreciation of the benefits that education has into New Zealand's social and cultural attitudes.

Early leaving exemptions: at present, students under 16 may apply to leave school. The Ministry of Education submitter was questioned on the criteria surrounding early leaving exemptions. The committee was not satisfied that early leaving exemptions are being used as wisely as possible, and the ministry's claim that early leaving exemptions were harder to obtain under the current Act was not supported by what some committee members had witnessed in their schools. We also considered whether early leaving exemptions should be removed from the education system. We recommend to the Government that the early leaving exemptions and the process to apply for early leaving exemptions be reviewed.

Boards of trustees—exclusions and expulsions: the submitter from Youth Law focused on the high numbers of excluded and expelled students and commented that boards of trustees too readily exclude—meaning expelling—a student under the age of 16 and that one-third of students who are suspended are expelled or excluded. The submitter suggested an amendment to the Education Act 1989 to make it harder for boards of trustees to expel or exclude students. The committee was divided on this point. Some members felt that boards of trustees should focus on the interests of all, whereas other members felt that we should use expulsion as a last and final measure. The committee was not satisfied that boards of trustees were doing this. We were also concerned about the fact that there is no obligation under the current Act for schools to reintegrate excluded students. We recommend that the Government look at improving this process and developing processes to ensure better communication between boards of trustees across New Zealand.

Finally, agency cooperation: the committee noted that despite the awareness of submitters of current social and cultural problems associated with retention, no individual agencies considered it their responsibility to implement these measures. We recommend to the Government that the Ministry of Education prioritise an examination of the responsibilities and roles of the various departments and agencies, so that they can develop a cooperative framework that will improve communication.

I consider it a rare honour and privilege to have worked alongside my fellow committee members, and I delight in presenting this report to the House. Thank you.

Report tabled.

INQUIRY INTO NATIONAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

Consideration of Report of Education and Science Committee

CORAL PANOHO (Tamaki Makaurau): I wish to present the report of the Education and Science Committee on its inquiry into whether the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) is a good idea. Background information for the purpose of this report is that level 1 of NCEA was implemented in 2002 with the other two levels following in consecutive years. NCEA was introduced to replace the “said to be outdated” norm-referenced assessment of School Certificate.

We as a committee heard evidence from the Post Primary Teachers Association (PPTA), the Ministry of Education, and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority. After thorough investigation and discussion surrounding the system of NCEA, the committee has acknowledged in the report that there are five key issues that raise concerns to be addressed by the Ministry of Education. These issues causing concern are recent options, cross-discipline courses, motivation levels, NCEA marks, and communication. Included in the report is a breakdown of all issues mentioned.

We as a collective support the standards-based approach introduced with NCEA but, like all other systems, consider that there are, inevitably, certain flaws that cause

growing concern. We have, therefore, encapsulated within our report a list of our recommendations to address these issues.

The first of our recommendations is that the Ministry of Education consider implementing national standards for determining eligibility for resits. We also ask the Government to consider having a limit to the number of resits while taking into account the particular needs of the various subjects. We note that it is difficult to compare cross-discipline courses. If course endorsements are introduced they may not be consistent across schools. We recommend that the Government consider this issue.

We agree that NCEA should be recognised to ensure that all students are effectively motivated. We recommend that the Ministry of Education consider action to ensure that teachers support and understand NCEA. We ask the Ministry of Education and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority to ensure that there is consistency in the number of Excellence awards made across subjects and greater transparency in the process by which the number of Excellence awards are issued. We recommend that each course be given an overall mark, not just marks for individual modules that have been completed.

Finally, we support the Ministry of Education's decision to improve communication about NCEA and emphasise that parents and other adult members of the community need to be better informed. We look forward to seeing the Government's response to our recommendations. Thank you.

Report tabled.

INQUIRY INTO THE RATE OF YOUNG PEOPLE KILLED IN MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS

Consideration of Report of Transport and Industrial Relations Committee

CAITLIN GROVER (Nelson): I wish to present the report on the Transport and Industrial Relations Committee on its inquiry into the rate of young people killed in motor vehicle accidents.

From the late 1980s until 2000 deaths and injuries to young people caused by car crashes dramatically decreased. Since 2000, there has been a slow increase. In 2005 young drivers were involved in 142 fatal traffic crashes, 795 in serious injury crashes, and 3,570 in minor injury crashes. We believe that the burden on society and on our health system of these numbers—indeed, of any number—of deaths and injuries is unacceptable, and we would like to put forward the following recommendations.

First, we recommend the extension of the learner licence from 6 months to 18 months, with a reduction to 12 months on the completion of a defensive driving course. It has been shown in Sweden that extending the learner licence period to 18 months increases the on-road experience of learner drivers from an average of 40 hours to 120 hours. Statistics also show that the biggest jump in danger for young drivers is the jump when they move into their restricted period. Therefore, we believe it would be a good idea to extend the learner licence period.

Also, we would like to move to the lowering of the maximum allowable blood-alcohol content—firstly, to zero milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood for those under 20 years and to 0.05 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood for those 20 years and over. This, hopefully, will reduce the number of crashes caused by drunk drivers. Coupled with this recommendation, we would also like to recommend that more funding be put into police saliva drug tests.

It has been proven that this is a serious problem in New Zealand at the moment, and we would like to face this problem. We have a lot of information on the demerit system. We recommend that this be made harsher and that people get a much harsher

punishment for breaching the licence rules. We hope this will deter so-called boy racers and give young people an incentive to be safer drivers.

Overall, our committee worked very hard during this time. We had a few disagreements and conflicting views. However, in the end we reached a compromise. Although we could not recommend all the evidence that the submitters—the Mayor of Wellington, the Ministry of Transport, the Candor Trust, AA, the Alcohol Advisory Council, and the New Zealand Police—put forward, we do see their submissions as valid and would like to acknowledge them for that. Also, we would like to make sure that these recommendations are well received. We hope that the Government will put them in motion, because we believe that the rate of young people killed in motor vehicle accidents will benefit from this and be reduced.

Report tabled.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I thank all of you for your very good work in the committees on a wide range of issues, all of importance. I especially thank you for reporting back to this House so well.

HOUSEHOLD RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE BILL

Second Reading

RICHARD AIOLUPOTEA (Independent): I move, *That the Household Response to Climate Change Bill be now read a second time.* If I may, I would like to introduce an activity for members of Parliament to participate in at this moment in time before I start my speech.

Members of Parliament, will you please all rub your hands together. If I say “mili”, you rub your hands together. If I say “pati”, you clap. Mili! Pati! Pati! If I say “hei hei”, you say “ho”. Hei hei!

Hon Members: Ho!

RICHARD AIOLUPOTEA: Mili! Pati! Pati! Hei hei!

Hon Members: Ho!

RICHARD AIOLUPOTEA: Hei hei!

Hon Members: Ho!

RICHARD AIOLUPOTEA: First of all, our climate is changing. How we respond to the issue of climate change will now determine the shape of our future, our economy, our environment, and our communities. The debate is no longer about whether climate change is happening, but what we do about it.

It is believed that New Zealand is at risk of failing to achieve its climate change targets under the Kyoto Protocol. What is your point of view? Do you agree or disagree? Are you for or against? I believe there are many ways of solving the change within New Zealand, to better New Zealand’s environment, community, and economy. I believe that the debate should no longer be about whether climate change is happening, but what we can do about it.

Actions speak louder than words. Why worry about other countries wanting to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, while not putting our country as the first priority? Does it seem wrong to you? If you agree with this, action should take place. We should focus on how to prevent global warming or climate change within New Zealand. The question is how.

What can be done in order to prevent pollution or any kind of global warming disaster from happening? Possible solutions include being a person who spends less. We know that it is difficult, but an easy way to conserve energy in today’s consumer economy is to simply use and buy less. Every time we buy something, energy has gone

into getting that product to us. So the less we buy, the more we save energy-wise. It is a simple equation.

So how about some specific things? Here are a few. Buy in bulk. In short, bulk items use less packaging, which translates into less energy. Buy one of something, not 21 of something. We do not need 21 pairs of shoes if one pair works just as well. Go through your closet and donate or recycle what you really do not need, then make a pledge not to replace everything you just got rid of. Buy quality products that will last longer; over time, you buy fewer products by doing that.

I suggest that if you want this world to be global-warming and climate-change free, why not start with New Zealand and keep New Zealand healthy and keep Aotearoa green. Thank you.

AWHINA-ROSE ASHBY (Northland): Tēnā koe Mr Speaker, tēnā koutou katoa e noho mai nei i raro i te tuanui o tēnei Whare. Te take e kōrero ana ahau i roto i te reo Māori. Nā, ko te reo Māori tōku reo tuatahi i akongia, i kōrero hoki e au. Koi anō te take, he māmā noa iho ki ahau te hanga whaikorero i tōku nei reo. Te ao māhana! Rangatahi mā! Me aha tātou? E mara, māmā noa iho te whakautu mō tērā! Kauwa rā tātou e noho wahangū ki ēnei āhuatanga e mahia nei e tātau, arā, te paruparu haere. Whakamutua ēnei mahi tūkino. Tērā pea, me whakamutua te nuinga o wēnei wheketere kia iti noa iho te moke e puta mai ana. Me mahara hoki tātau ki a rātou anō ngā tāngata e kuware, ā, e kore rātou e hiahia ana ki te hoatu moni kia panga tō rātou pēke rapihī i te parū. Nā, ko tō rātou mahi he tahu i tō rātou rapihī, he tūkino anō tērā.

I ēnei rā, kua tata katoa kē ngā tāngata e taraiwa motokā ana, ā, i muri i ngā motokā nei e puta mai ana te moki. Koi anō tētahi mate hei āwhina i te ao mahana. Nā reira e tātou mā, kua e nohopuku, tū ake i nāianei ki te āwhina i te ao me ngā tāngata hoki, kia kua e tae atu ki te wā, ka toromi tātou me ngā taitamariki kei te heke mai nei.

Whakarongo mai! Mā tōu atawhai, mā tōku āwhina ka ora tātou me te ao hurihuri engari, mā tōu mahi tūkino, mā tōku moki rānei ka toromi tātou i te wai. Nā, me aha rā? Me pēnei te kōrero, he rangatira koe, he kiore rānei? Māu rā e whiriwhiri. Kia ora.

[An interpretation in English was given to the House.]

[Greetings to you, Mr Speaker, and to all seated about me beneath the roof of this House. The reason I am speaking in Māori is that it is the first language that I learnt and I speak it as well. That is why it is easier for me to make up speeches in my language. Global warming! Fellow youth MPs! What should we do? Well, colleagues, the answer is a simple one. We should not remain silent and ignore the pollution we are creating as we go along. Stop these acts of pollution! Perhaps we should shut down the majority of these factories and reduce emissions. Let us not forget those lazy ones who simply do not pay for their rubbish to be dumped and as a result burn it instead—another negative action towards the atmosphere.]

Today, nearly everyone drives a car, and exhaust fumes are another negative contribution to global warming. Therefore, we must not sit about passively; we must rise up and make a stand now in order to protect the world, and, most important, ourselves, before it comes to the time when we and further generations suffer consequences that may lead to drowning.

Listen! With your care and my help, the world and the people will survive, but with your pollution and my negative action we may die by drowning. What should we do? Let us put it this way: are you a leader or a mouse? Your choice! Thank you.]

JAMES BARNETT (List): Households are not the problem. They should not be punished for the energy problems of this country, but I agree that they should cut back and be more efficient. However, no matter what, demand will rise nationwide as our population increases.

To meet our Kyoto obligations we have to think seriously about our energy supply future. Currently, emissions from the energy sector account for about 43 percent of total emissions in the country. We must cut our emissions by 25 percent to meet our Kyoto obligations, or face the \$557 million penalty. We must tear down our polluting, old, Third World - thinking gas and coal power plants.

Now, members may think that I mean that we need to build extra hydro capacity, or wind farms. Wind farms are a great supplement to our system, but they are simply never going to be our solution. Also, do we really want all of our hills and ranges across the country covered in wind turbines? Our hydro capacity is stable. However, the capacity for extra hydro generation is running thin. We must build nuclear power. There are no emissions from nuclear power plants. They are clean, they are safe, and they use very little uranium to generate power, and there is much uranium available. Seven percent of the world already uses nuclear power. I say that we should tap into this.

If the price of gas doubles, the price of power will increase 60 percent. If, on the other hand, the price of uranium doubles, the cost of power will rise only by 5 percent. Gas will run out. We will face extremely high prices if we continue using it. Our solution is nuclear power. Households should not be punished for the energy mistakes of this country. This bill is not the solution; building nuclear power plants is.

Hon Member: That's rubbish!

JAMES BARNETT: There is nothing wrong with nuclear power. It is clean, safe, and reliable. We would only need about two nuclear power plants in the country in order to cut back on our coal and gas usage. Placing one of those up near Auckland would remove the need for big transmission lines. That would stop children from being born deformed, because there would no longer be the risk of cancer from the power transmission lines running through the Waikato.

Hon Member: Do we want Chernobyl to happen here?

JAMES BARNETT: Chernobyl was 20 years ago. The Soviet Union ran Chernobyl. It started that plant without even running the appropriate safety tests. Technology has come a long way since Chernobyl. Chernobyl is not going to happen in New Zealand. There are key and valuable ways for waste to be disposed of that countries such as the United States of America are currently using. They bury their waste deep in the ground in order for it to dispose of itself over the time it takes. I do not support this bill.

SAMUEL BROWN (Dunedin South): Climate change—the question is: how can we tackle this huge problem that is facing New Zealand and our planet? Some people say that using environmentally friendly products or using natural resources for energy is the solution. But are we deciding to act too late? Has the problem escalated to unsolvable proportions? Have the world and our country gone so far down the track that no matter what we do, it will not make a difference?

This may be the case, but every step we take to decrease the growth of our ecological footprint is a good one. The people who say we can solve our problem by playing our part are correct. It does not matter whether we do only a tiny little thing; every step is a good step. That is why I think that a voucher for one shrub or small tree could be sent to every New Zealand home. That way we would all know that we were playing our part in creating a cleaner and greener environment.

Let us think about this. If something so small and so easy can make such a difference, then imagine what we can do with the Government's \$9 billion surplus. MTV has just launched a campaign called Switch. This is promoting saving energy and decreasing carbon and methane emissions. However, not all New Zealanders are seeing this. We need a large campaign with eye-catching billboards and attention-grabbing TV advertisements that are free to air.

The biggest and most vital step for New Zealand at this point is awareness of the problem that is facing us. Then we can move on to how we can fix it. Inaction is said to be up to 20 times more costly, so we have to act and act now. I am sorry to say that thinking about this problem or visualising how it can be fixed is simply not enough. We need to take action, even if it is not the best or most convenient choice, and I think we all appreciate that we need action sooner rather than later.

It is our generation that has to sort out this problem. I know that it may be a huge weight on our shoulders, but it does not have to be. Turning off the TV at the wall and turning off that little stand-by light can save up to 150 kilograms of carbon dioxide—and that is something so simple. Small things—like showering for only a short time and washing clothes only when there is a full load—may seem insignificant but they are not. They could impact on the world just as much as the first man on the moon or the first world wars.

So let us act now. Let us use what the world has given us to keep it alive: wind, water, the sun, and, most important, ourselves. It may be too late to reduce the growth of our ecological footprint but we can reduce its rapid increase. So let us step up and take responsibility for our country and our planet. Let us live comfortably for an extra 1,000 years or more and take those steps to slow down our growing ecological footprint.

JENIFER CANT (List): We have signed the Kyoto Protocol, we have ratified it, and now we have to do something about it. So what are we going to do, nationally and individually? The Government has to lead the paradigm shift and focus on individual responsibility so that we as a country reduce our emissions and keep in check with the Kyoto Protocol obligations.

In 1990 our emissions were 61.9 megatons of carbon dioxide, but in 2005 they reached 77.2 megatons of carbon dioxide. That is a 25 percent increase on the original 1990 amount. That is how much we have to decrease our emissions by. If we do not, well, all bad actions or a lack of action will result in punishment, and in this case our projected total cost would be \$557 million. Our international reputation would not fare too well, either. So what is stopping us from reaching these levels?

The three main areas of concern in New Zealand are emissions from vehicle use, natural gas, and electricity usage, with the average New Zealand household generating 4.19 tonnes of carbon dioxide per annum. A nationwide solution the Government is suggesting is having carbon credits up to the value of \$500 per year for households that have 10 percent less emissions than expected, and/or having a system where households recover 50 percent of the initial costs from converting to more efficient energy systems.

However, households must monitor their fuel usage and their electricity usage, they are not obliged to set up carbon credit accounts in the first place, and they may at any point sign a form and stop using a carbon credit account. Basically, this would be a voluntary system, where only some of the cost is reduced. The system is not very convenient, and in a practical sense for many New Zealanders, it may be only a short-term solution. Although the incentive of credit is offered, the cost is too high, even for families who are aware of the carbon emission problem. But, I ask members, where is the disincentive?

On an individual level households need to take more responsibility for decreasing their emissions. However, the Government first needs to lead a paradigm shift and, rather than place an emphasis on credit for efficiency, more of an emphasis needs to be placed on what the carbon emissions are doing to the environment and on the effects we can expect in the future if we continue in the way that we are. The more educated people are about the problem, then the more likely they are to want to do something about it.

We have 4 years to decrease emissions by 25 percent. If we do not, it is \$557 million down the drain, and there are better things this Government can spend money on. We should have a system of a combination of penalties and rewards for emission levels, with more convenience than a process of recording power and fuel usage. Carbon credits are a step in the right direction, but they are not the silver bullet.

To increase the effectiveness of the scheme, people need to be educated on what carbon emissions are doing to the environment, and they need the means to achieve this. Giving households 50 percent of the cost and \$500 annually is not enough with the initial costs being so high. The Government should look to invest more in the short term into lowering costs now, as more households would then take more responsibility for energy efficiency.

A high investment now means less cost, if any, when we reach 2012. If we implement this now, future generations will already have the means in place and will be educated on the importance of energy efficiency. This will result in higher efficiency and the Government investment can then be lowered as appropriate.

This problem will not go away overnight, and it is a long-term issue for New Zealand. So let us set some long-term goals and make this carbon credit scheme into a long-term solution.

ALEXANDER CLARK (List): Hau, wai, ahi, whenua, ngākau: mā ēnei pūkaha e whakakotahitia, mā tātou te ao e whakaora.

[An interpretation in English was given to the House.]

[Wind, water, fire, land, and will-power: with a combination of these powers, we can save the planet.]

With this ancient message of inspiration in our minds, I would like to bring fellow planetees and youth parliamentarians to the very important matter at hand—our requirement and obligation as a nation to meet our very important commitment to the Kyoto Protocol. After carefully looking through every aspect of this bill I came to the belief, however, that the implementation of the carbon account system is not the way to achieve our commitments. Firstly, the complexity is obvious to anyone who has read the bill.

Imagine the costly and near impossible task of trying to calculate the “reasonable expected consumption” of fossil fuels for hundreds and thousands of unique households, each with countless factors to take into consideration. This variation means that many important requirements will never be accounted for, such as households with a troubled teenage male who has too many uncontrollable dreams of passion every month, requiring extra power to clean the dirty laundry.

However, the point that I find most detrimental to the aim of meeting Kyoto Protocol obligations is that through trying to compensate for all of these energy requirements, some households could easily get granted too many allowances, resulting in a tax credit without any actual cutbacks in fossil fuel usage.

I could go on for several minutes, looking at even more flaws, but I would rather move on to a solution that can be used to replace what has been proposed. We need another option, as opposed to implementing this expensive and flawed carbon account system.

The bill itself rubbishes the idea of a carbon tax on all emissions, claiming it to be too negative and having no incentive for society to strive for. However, this would not be the case if we went that extra step and redistributed this carbon tax equally at the end of the tax year as a flat rate rebate to all households. Depending on the amount of carbon tax each household has paid through fossil fuel usage, this rebate would in itself be either a tax incentive or a tax debit.

For example, a household that uses less fossil fuels than the national average will pay less carbon tax than the amount it receives at the end of the year in its carbon tax rebate—in other words, a tax incentive. In the same way, someone who uses more fossil fuels than the average will have a yearly tax penalty. Thank you.

AMY COATSWORTH (List): I would like to start by saying I do not think nuclear energy is a good idea. I do not think that uranium is a sustainable energy source, and it would create more problems than it would solve.

I agree in general with the bill we are discussing. We definitely need to cut back our greenhouse gas emissions, and we should do that as a country as we are all responsible. But I feel that the bill is focusing only on households, not on businesses or companies, or even on taxpayer-funded buildings, such as Parliament.

Look around, ladies and gentlemen. I have counted at least 40 lights in this room alone. The light bulbs in the ceiling, above the glass above us, are 300 to 400 watts. I feel that is too much, and that at least half the lights in these rooms are unnecessary. Who is paying for them? It is us, the taxpayers. We are paying for this unnecessary lighting, and the unnecessary overheating. I feel almost like I am in Fiji.

I feel that Parliament should start to cut back its electricity usage, thereby saving us money and cutting down greenhouse gas emissions. This would leave us with more money as a country to invest in more research to find a better way to cut back greenhouse gas emissions. Thank you.

LUKE CRAVEN (List): We need to stop thinking that, as New Zealand, we can save the planet. New Zealand contributes just 0.02 percent of world carbon emissions. We alone cannot stop global warming. All we can do is reduce the financial impact to New Zealand when the Kyoto Protocol rolls around. That is the real purpose of this bill.

I think that this bill is a waste of paper, and if there were a recycling bin on the ground, then I would throw it in there—almost. It is unlikely that the target population of approximately 790,000 households will take up and implement this approach within the necessary time period. Despite this, New Zealand is part of the global economy, and it needs to be seen to be a good international citizen.

Gwilym Breese: So then we should reduce our bloody carbon emissions.

LUKE CRAVEN: We need, therefore, to work towards the implementation of a wide-ranging emissions reduction strategy—you are one step ahead of me all the time, and you need to shut up and listen—which should include the wider use of biofuels. This would substantially reduce our transport emissions, which represent 17.8 percent of our total emissions. The use of biofuels is already widespread in places such as North America, and the technology is readily available. New Zealand has multiple resources that we could use to produce biofuels, such as the by-products from milk and wood processing. I believe more emphasis needs to be put on the utilisation of resources.

To help address this issue, we should encourage the move towards more sustainable energy sources. New Zealand has been described by some as the Saudi Arabia of wind, and we should take advantage of this by embracing wind energy. Other sources such as solar and tidal energy have a greater part to play in our energy generation needs. To encourage an uptake of such policies we should be rewarding energy companies that invest in such options.

To achieve such aims we should look at combining all these options into one piece of legislation, and look at targeting businesses, households, and farms all in one go to ensure that all sectors are sharing the burden evenly. This legislation could form the basis of a broader systematic approach to reduce both our emissions and our financial impact from the Kyoto Protocol. But in its current form this legislation is not the solution, and that is why I will not be supporting it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can I just remind members that they must not use the words “you” or “your” in this Chamber. If they do that they are referring to the Speaker, and that contributor, in effect, told the Speaker to shut up.

LUKE CRAVEN (List): I apologise.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

JOHNNY CRAWFORD (Aoraki): I believe that the bill is like a doughnut: sweet and sugary on the outside, but with a massive hole in the middle. That hole is the fact that a third of all New Zealanders live in homes they do not own. Nearly 90 percent of these people pay weekly rental payments for their houses. The proposed bill does not offer any way for people in this situation to reduce their household carbon emissions. Because they do not own their dwellings they are not able to make changes to their houses to increase energy efficiency, and because this bill is voluntary, landlords are unlikely to make modifications to their properties by way of insulation because they do not live there and thus will not benefit from any of the changes.

The only people who will benefit from these incentives will be those who choose to participate in this scheme. People will also not volunteer to be part of a scheme that will penalise them for not reducing emissions by 10 percent. This means that the already substantial gap between rich and poor would widen, as only the rich would benefit from the proposed tax incentives if they were given a choice.

This is why mandatory legislation is imperative. Mandatory legislation is clearly a sensible way for New Zealand to combat climate change and reduce our ecological footprint. It is pointless to introduce legislation that people can choose to agree with, because those who do not benefit from it will not participate. However, if it were compulsory for everybody to insulate their residences and convert to more efficient sources, then the problem would be solved.

A reasonable target would be that homeowners, including landlords, would have to insulate all permanent residences and convert to environmentally sustainable energy by the year 2012. Government financial assistance for a conversion would still be available to everyone. It would be mandatory for all houses to be inspected and signed off, to ensure that New Zealand achieved energy efficiency by 2012. Homeowners who did not comply would incur a substantial fine.

It is too late to debate whether climate change is happening. The only uncertainty is the extent, time, and form of the damage that undeniably will occur if New Zealand does not find a way to reduce carbon emissions. There is no way to reduce levels of carbon emissions to the Kyoto Protocol targets if the only legislation passed by the New Zealand Government is an optional bill that New Zealanders can choose to adhere to, if there is a financial reward in it for them. The only way to achieve the Kyoto Protocol targets and to reduce New Zealand’s ecological footprint is with clear, decisive, and mandatory legislation. People will not find ways to reduce household emissions unless there is some sort of financial benefit in it for all New Zealanders or the Government leaves them with no choice but to do so.

I will wrap up by saying that the bill is like a cattle beast: a point here, a point there, but with a whole lot of bull in between.

LARA DELANY (East Coast Bays): When we take a look at our surroundings, we cannot help but feel blessed that we live here in New Zealand with our clean, green, livable environment. However, at the same time, I cannot help but wonder how much longer we can retain our environment in its present state. For many years now we have been aware of the effects our actions have on the environment. We have had that niggling feeling at the back of our minds when we choose to drive the car to the dairy instead of walking, and when we choose to switch on the heater instead of just grabbing

an extra blanket from the linen cupboard. When it comes down to it, it is all about choices and decisions.

Here, yet another decision awaits us as we consider the Household Response to Climate Change Bill. Already we have signed the Kyoto Protocol, the first in a set of stepping stones that will put us on the right path for an environmentally sustainable future. However, with the first step undertaken we now need to consider our options to ensure that we reach our targets as set by the protocol. We need to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions to the level they were in 1990, or else we pay the price. This bill offers us only one option—one choice, one possible solution—and I do not believe that this is the option that will guarantee us the results we need.

This bill promotes idealism, meaning that although it looks good on paper, in practice and reality it would not be successful. The focus of the bill is not broad enough. By concentrating only on household gas emissions we are neglecting the bigger picture. There are other factors resulting in the rise of gas emissions. Are household gas emissions really the key factor causing the damage to our environment? No. When we look at the facts, we see that the greater part of the world's gas emissions is due to land use, land-use change, and forestry activities. These are not in the current international policy, and major factors such as these should be taken into consideration.

Looking at and targeting the bigger issues is the answer. I know that it is all about playing one's part and doing one's best, and that every little bit counts towards a better future. I know that contribution and participation are the most important components to a better environment for our people to live in. But it seems pointless to put all this effort into a system that, let us face it, may not have any effect whatsoever.

A voluntary system where people gain rewards does not sound like the initiative we are looking for. Firstly, it is voluntary, which means that not all of the country will be partaking and giving their full support. Secondly, when we look at the amount of effort that will go into making changes to help reduce the gas emissions, we see that the rewards seem like only a minimal bonus.

Unanimous support and effort is needed, not only from New Zealand but from the rest of the world. Without the support of countries such as China, Russia, and the United States we cannot achieve the ideals that we have put in place. We need to change our way of thinking and realise that quick fixes are not going to solve long-term problems. We should remember that it was the tortoise that won the race, not the hare.

ZOE DONALD (List): When I first heard the topic for the debate for this Youth Parliament was climate change, I thought: "What has this got to do with me?". I was expecting to discuss something like party pills or the driving age.

My generation has not caused the environmental problems facing the planet, and we are too young to be allowed the responsibility to fix them. However, although our parents must act, and are starting to now, it is us who will, as they say, inherit the Earth. We live in a time when we are more than ever part of the problem, and when the pressure on the world's resources continues to increase. We consume far more, we buy more clothes, more stuff, and more food, and we travel more than our parents did at our age. We live at a time when the economies of India and China, two hugely populated countries, are booming. Can we imagine what will happen to the planet if the 2 billion people in those countries squander resources like we do and if every young person in those countries wants to live as we do? We cannot expect them to contain their consumption if we do not try to reduce ours.

One very simple thing we can all do is think about what we buy. Climate change tells us that we need to be more aware of the energy that goes into the making and the transporting of the products we consume, and the carbon emissions that arise from production and transportation. It is no longer sustainable for products to be flown or

shipped around the world two or three times before they hit our shops. It is no longer sustainable for two ships to pass in the Tasman Sea, one carrying Griffin's biscuits and Tip Top ice cream from New Zealand to Australia, and the other carrying Arnott's biscuits and Streets ice cream from Australia to New Zealand. Too many of the products we buy daily have been unnecessarily shipped here from around the world. I do understand that there are some things that cannot be grown or manufactured in New Zealand, but there are many products we import from overseas that can be produced here.

By buying locally we will not only be cutting down on our greenhouse gas emissions but also be keeping jobs in New Zealand, therefore lowering unemployment rates. Where we can, we should buy local, and we should always try to buy Kiwi-made products. So next time we are at the supermarket, we should just take that extra minute to read the back of the packet to see where the product is made. We could be making a world of difference.

Shortly, a Green Youth MP will be tabling a document that outlines the intention of its signatories to abstain on the vote before the Youth Parliament on 11 July. We will abstain on this vote not because we disagree in any way that drastic action to fight climate change is necessary but because we feel that this is an inappropriate and ineffective bill in terms of meeting New Zealand's Kyoto commitments and having an impact on climate change.

This bill, we believe, is pathetic and ineffective. We feel it may suffice as a first step, and we encourage the attempt to assist ordinary New Zealanders' contributions to sustainability, but, in our opinion, it is a poor first step with an unjustifiable economic cost and a negligible impact. Our wish for change would mean that this is a bill we support. Our intention to do otherwise shows our clear disapproval of this particular scheme. If any members wish to sign the document, they should speak to any Youth MP representing the Green Party.

SHAUN KENNEDY (List): I raise a point of order, Mr Speaker. As a Kiwi I find it offensive that the member does not think I can count the calories in my diet.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of order. It is a matter for debate. Are there any further speakers on this bill?

ARIANA EMERY (Te Tai Hauauru): Tēnā koe, Mr Speaker, me ngā mema pāremata rangatahi mā, tēnā koutou katoa.

[Greetings to you, Mr Speaker, and greetings to all fellow youth parliamentarians.]

The world is our place, but Aotearoa is where we call home, is it not? I ask this question: if we love our country, why are we destroying it? What gives us the right as people of this nation to call Aotearoa our home, when it is ourselves who are destroying the very earth that nurtures us?

My nan once told me a story about when her mum was young—around 10 years old. She lived with her many younger siblings, her nan, koro, mum, and dad. One night it was takeaway night. Yep, fish and chips. Being the oldest, she went to pick up the kai. With her kete she walked through the floundering flats, over the stony creeks, across the grass paddocks, and down a dirt pathway until she arrived at her destination. On the river's edge she quietly recited a prayer giving thanks that she had arrived safely and for the food she was about to receive. As she counted her tribe, she gathered her kai and headed home. At home, her mum had already prepared the potatoes.

And so, Mr Deputy Speaker and fellow members, I present to you the first takeaways before McDonald's and KFC arrived: fish and chips, as natural as it gets—Māori style. The river back then was the first port of call of many things. It was the main highway for travel, the swimming baths, the fish and chip shop, the laundrette, and

the mall—a place to hang out and to share and trade foods and goods. The awa and its surroundings were indeed a central part of my nan's life.

I asked the question: "These things were simple then, eh?". Holding her walking stick, and with eyes that told a thousand stories, Nan said: "Āe, moko, mā te manaaki whenua, ka ora ai te iwi."—when you look after and respect the land, the people will flourish.

I ask members to stop and think. In a time when gadgets make a job quicker, we never seem to have enough time. In 2007 we are supposed to know more, yet we know less. We are told that we are looking towards a prosperous future, yet we have ignored the ever so important lessons of the past. We once heard that one small step for man was one great leap for mankind. Although we have reached the moon, we have forgotten to care for the earth. Technology has come to us in abundance, but at a price—it has cost the earth. I am being taught today about conservation, global warming, and the importance of caring for the planet. In the old days, people did not need to be reminded about these things because they lived them.

I am not here to give members statistics and present research done by many scientists from near and far. We have seen the damage being caused and we have seen the changes happening around the world. To change the world today, we should celebrate a special occasion by planting a tree and not by buying an electric device. We should bike or walk instead of driving everywhere and going nowhere. We should put out a smoke instead of lighting it up. We should always remember that global warming does not know the colour of our skin or who our parents are. In the end global warming affects everyone; all races and nations around the world have a responsibility to protect our earth.

As I end my speech, I ask members: if this is our home, why are we destroying it? We each have the capacity to make a change, to offer something positive towards our future. Nō reira, Mr Speaker, I leave you and fellow members with this proverb: "Nāu te rourou, nāku te rourou, ka ora ai te iwi." With your basket of knowledge, and my basket of knowledge, together we can ensure a bright and prosperous future for us all. Tēnā koutou katoa.

RICHARD ENGLISH (List): Climate change cannot be avoided—it is already far too late. The irony is that although the signs of climate change have been around for decades, up until very recently anybody with the political power to do anything about the problem has adopted a somewhat head-in-the-sand approach, just hoping that it would go away. Well, it has not gone away, and it will not go away.

The enduring question seems to be: what can be done to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions? The next question that comes to mind is: just whose responsibility is it to make these reductions? Is this an issue that should be dealt with by the Government through national initiatives? Or is this an issue that should be forced upon society on a per household basis, removing the responsibility for initiatives on to the individual households? I believe that the solution lies at some point in between.

I think it is important to instil in the public the idea of personal responsibility for the greenhouse gas emissions they produce. In my opinion, on a per household basis the most feasible method for reducing electricity use—and therefore emissions—is to use solar hot water heating systems. Approximately half of the average household's electricity use is to heat water. Most of this energy can be sourced from solar hot water heating systems. If solar hot water heating systems were to become commonplace, then aside from greatly reducing demand for electricity they would also reduce stress on our ailing national electricity grid.

However, the major prohibitive factor in solar hot water heating is the cost. I believe this is where the Government has an opportunity to assist, whether through investment

in large-scale production or individual subsidies. Conversely, I believe the most feasible Government initiative would be to introduce compulsory ethanol blends of gasoline. Given that roughly 75 percent of a household's emissions are fuel related it seems to make more sense to change the fuel than to try relentlessly to change public behaviour.

Ethanol has a bright future in New Zealand, as it is more viable than any of the other prospective alternative fuels like bio-diesel or—laughably—hydrogen. This is because 100 percent efficiency would require only 1.2 percent of all farmable land in New Zealand to grow feedstocks for a 10 percent blend of ethanol and gasoline. Ethanol also produces only 20 percent of the emissions of gasoline, making it an attractive option with regard to fast-approaching Kyoto Protocol deadlines.

In conclusion, there are endless ways in which we can reduce our greenhouse gas emissions—these are merely two. The big issue is how much responsibility should be placed upon the households of New Zealand. I think it is important that the public is involved. However, I believe it would be a mistake to involve the public too onerously. Whatever we choose to do as a nation, climate change is a big deal and needs urgent action. However, this bill is ineffective and unnecessary. Thank you.

KAITLYN GULLAND (List): Hi, my name is Kaitlyn Gulland, and I am a student from Van Asch Deaf Education Centre in Christchurch. I was born deaf and I grew up learning both oral and sign language. In 2005 I had an operation to get a cochlea implant, which allows me better access to conversation and sound. To support my understanding, I have an interpreter to assist me.

Something needs to be done about global warming now—not tomorrow, not next year, but now. Every day that passes by without any change is making the world warmer and more at risk. We will all remember seeing in the news, last year, the strange sight of icebergs floating silently past the home of the Highlanders in Dunedin. How did this happen—icebergs from Antarctica appearing off the coast of New Zealand? The answer is that the earth's atmosphere is getting warmer and warmer because of the pollution we are producing here on earth. The pollution pumps greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. These gases come from many of the things we use and take for granted every day—for example, cleaning products that contain methane, car emissions that produce carbon dioxide, and the disposal of household rubbish that produces methane, just to mention a few. To add to this is the concern about the decreasing size of forests around the world.

So what can each of us do to help change global warming? If everyone tried to use their cars less and public transport more, we would all be helping to save the earth. I know that people say that buses take too long or cost too much, but by taking the bus and sharing transport we all help to save the earth from global warming. We can all learn to recycle. By saving on paper we keep our trees and forests, which use up the carbon dioxide to give us precious oxygen. Every kilogram of rubbish we take to the dump puts 2 kilograms of methane into the atmosphere, so we must recycle more than we currently do. By doing these things we can help to change the climate of global warming.

I would now like to focus for a moment on another meaning of climate change. This Labour Government has worked hard to bring about a change of climate for the population of Deaf people in New Zealand. I will now use New Zealand Sign Language to tell members what I mean.

[An interpretation was given to the House]

[New Zealand Sign Language is now the third official language in New Zealand. The New Zealand Sign Language Bill was brought to Parliament by my colleague Ruth Dyson, and was passed on 6 April 2006.]

Having their language recognised as official and unique has made a major impact on many Deaf people in New Zealand, and it has led to New Zealand Sign Language being included as part of the curriculum. It has also provided the basis for New Zealand Sign Language programmes in early childhood settings, and in primary and secondary schools.

The relay system has also been brought in by the Labour Government. This means that Deaf people can access the telecommunications system in the same way as can hearing people. The newborn hearing screening programme has been introduced in parts of the North Island, and will be rolled out throughout the country over the next 3 years. This means that a deaf baby can be given lots of support and access to communication at an early age.

On behalf of the Deaf community I express my thanks to this Government for the changes they have made in the climate for the Deaf community.]

In the same way that the small changes made by this Government have made a big change in the lives of Deaf people in New Zealand, we and this Government must all help to change global warming by making small changes in our everyday lives. Peace out.

OLIVIA HALL (Kaikoura): The question brought forth is: how can New Zealand reduce its ecological footprint? The national debate over what to do—if anything—about the increasing concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere has become a complex subject. The reason is that global climate change is heavy with far-reaching implications for human society and the kind of world we will live in decades from now.

Have members ever asked themselves how much of the earth's surface is required to support them in the style to which they are accustomed? I believe that this is also a moral issue. We as New Zealanders need to rise together to secure our future in this beautiful country, because at the present time our ability to live on planet Earth is at stake.

I have been to my local council to discuss what we as a community are doing to reduce the level of greenhouse gas emissions produced by households, and how we are playing our part in reducing the risk of global warming. We as a community have adopted Green Globe New Zealand. Green Globe is an international tourism standard started after the 1992 United Nations Earth Summit by tourism industries, to address environmental problems. Kaikōura has a stunning environment, which is important to the community and attracts over 1 million visitors each year. As a result, we need to look after our environment for the community, the tourists, and the next generation, so we adopted Green Globe to help us do this. Kaikōura is a Green Globe – certified community, and the first local authority in the world to achieve this.

But what does this mean? Green Globe is a tool used by Kaikōura's community to measure and reduce its impact on the environment in order to become more sustainable. To become certified, we first had to measure our impact, which is also known as benchmarking. For example, we calculated how much energy we used, and how much greenhouse gas and waste we produced, so we knew what impact we were having. We can manage that impact, and reduce the effects, by adopting policies and practices to lead us towards sustainability.

Every resident, business, and tourist in Kaikōura has an impact on the environment. We all use energy, and we all create carbon dioxide and waste, but each of us can do our part to reduce our impact. By becoming involved in Green Globe we can all do our bit to sustain and improve our land, waters, and air for future generations. I believe that if every local council adopts a zero-waste policy, and becomes involved in Green Globe, then we can start to reduce our ecological footprint, because nuclear is not the answer.

SAMUEL JACKSON (Helensville): I am sure that most here are concerned about climate change. All research points not to whether we will see climate change in the not too distant future but instead to how badly we will be affected. So I am in agreement with all here who are determined to make effective changes to reduce the factors causing climate change. I will not be cheesy and say that we must make a world that is clean and green for our children, because I do not have any children. But I am sure we are all in agreement that our role is to ensure we leave this world in a better condition than the one in which we got it.

So to those who, like me, are determined to make effective change, I ask whether this bill will truly enable this. First and foremost, this bill is in fact pretty much straight from the Government itself, because it is one that will make the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. My first point, I tell members, is that it will be those who can afford environmentally friendly alternatives who will be able to reduce their emissions to receive a rebate. In clause 6 it says that we are to pick environmentally friendly alternatives. So once again I commend the Government for producing such a bill, which is not reducing climate change but is, in fact, enhancing the ability of the rich to get richer.

The fact is, also, that the amount of emissions we are talking about reducing will have no global impact, either. Let us say that we all reduce our emissions. Let us say that we cut them to a certain level. That will not have any effect on the global impact. I know that we can say, hey, at least we are taking a step. But I tell members that this is not a big enough step. The bill is simply shifting blame from the Government to the average New Zealander. It is another example of this Government shifting the blame from itself and putting it on to the average New Zealander and on to the average household.

I say that instead of this ridiculous bill, how about increased public transport in Auckland, how about this Government getting serious about biofuels, and how about us getting serious about effective ways of burning coal? India, China, and America are all burning coal and we cannot stop that, so how about we start to make a global impact by researching ways of making biofuel and finding better ways of burning coal? It is time to make effective change. I say to the Government that this legislation is a pile of rubbish, which we will recycle. I say that we must instead use biofuels—fuels that in fact will reduce climate change. Thank you.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We were due to break for lunch during that speech. We have only two more speakers scheduled in this debate. Would some honourable member kindly seek leave for two more speakers to be heard before lunch? Leave has been sought. Is there any objection? There appears to be none, so we will continue.

SOPHIA JOHNSON (Auckland Central): I am 17 years old. In so many years I will be 40. Maybe I will have children. What kind of world will I live in, and what kind of world will my children live in? According to the Minister for the Environment we will live in a very bad one. Then why are we exporting the dirtiest, most greenhouse-intensive fuel—coal—in vast amounts to China? Why does our infrastructure make it so easy to drive and so hard to do anything else? Why is our country littered with advertisements that give us one clear message: it is good to consume. I watched and I listened and I saw greed—greed and consumption.

There was once a beautiful island called Easter Island. It was covered in trees and life. It was colonised by the Polynesians. Four chiefs competed to be the greatest chief on the island. They built four huge statues, and they cut down all the trees to mine the stones. Soon the soil lost its fertility, people starved, and the birds left. Today there are no trees on Easter Island but there are four huge statues. Is this what we will leave on our world?

What can we do to address greed? First of all, we can decentralise, like Cuba has, and move away from our cities, which cannot support us. They cannot support our infinite growth within a finite system. Second, we must learn about our environment. The forest sinks that the Government has been creating—planting rows and rows of trees—do not create an ecosystem. We must take time to walk on the earth that created us and understand it a little bit more. We must introduce restrictions on the heavily polluting industries that billow smoke into our cities and into our atmosphere. We must learn to fit in with our ecosystem and not exploit it or use it as a resource for human consumption. What kind of world will we and our children live in? Perhaps a very beautiful one.

SOPHIE KALDERIMIS (List): We do not inherit the land from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children. Obviously, we are not going to be returning it in a very good shape. At present, New Zealand's projected cost of liability under the Kyoto protocol is approximately \$557 million, which shows our poor efforts to reduce our carbon emissions. So what can we do to decrease our carbon emissions to the sought-after Kyoto Protocol – agreed levels?

The Household Response to Climate Change Bill has the right idea. To reduce carbon emissions we must not only develop sustainable and renewable energy but we must also reduce our demand, and we must do this in our homes. Clause 6(1) states: "Any household may open one household carbon account". In a matter of such importance and associated required effort, we cannot simply give people the choice of cooperating, as it will turn into a case of those not desiring the tax cuts enough not putting in the effort and leaving those people who need the money to do the work. Yet those people who need the money may not be able to afford the measures to comply with the Act. However, the State cannot and should not force people to comply with this legislation, and this is a fundamental flaw.

Additionally, this bill will be a massive and expensive task for the Government to undertake. The hours needed to set up the eco-card, to decide on reasonable energy outputs on which each household can base its energy-saving calculations, and to visit all participating houses to record the efforts of changing to energy-efficient technologies, are numerous and excessive. That amount is inefficient and unacceptable. We must address the numerous areas of concern before we can ask families to adhere to this legislation. Our public transport is pathetic and needs to be improved. We cannot expect people to give up their cars if they cannot have other adequate transport to use instead.

I believe we must start researching nuclear power. We have been asked over the past few days whether coal would be so bad if we could catch the carbon dioxide. If we could capture the waste and the radiation released, then why would nuclear waste be so bad? Nuclear power is based on uranium-235 fuel, and it is safe enough to hold in a vial, on one's hand, in a plastic glass. It is the waste that is the worry. I do not think burying our problem under a pile of land in America is the way to solve it. That would be brushing our problems under the rug. We need to start researching the ways to recycle the waste so that nuclear power can become efficient. We need to use our money efficiently, and this bill is not the way.

Sitting suspended from 12.48 p.m. to 1.40 p.m.

DAPHNE KALEKALE (List): In the early 1960s President Kennedy said in a speech: "We all breathe the same air." Those words were spoken in a different world, at a different time, yet how true they still are today. Last weekend a new Live Earth global concert called Save Our Selves—The Campaign for a Climate in Crisis was performed around seven international cities and attracted artists like Black Eyed Peas, Madonna, and our own Crowded House, to name but a few.

What is so important that all these artists dedicated their time to this cause? Al Gore, with his Oscar-winning film *An Inconvenient Truth*, led to Live Earth. An international rock concert called Live Earth would reach millions of people. People were then asked to sign up to a carbon-reducing footprint plan. But what can I do? What can you or anyone in this Chamber do? I propose the “I” plan, based on ideas from the Live Earth pledge. The “I” plan would list as follows—and remember, this is what you or any other individuals can do right now—I pledge that I will change four light bulbs in my home to compact fluorescent light bulbs; I will shop for the most energy-efficient electronics and appliances; I will shut off my equipment and lights whenever I am not using them; I will ride public transport or car pool one or more times per week, or walk whenever possible; I will forward a Live Earth email message to five friends; I will add my name to the Live Earth pledge; I will say no to plastic bags; I will write to my MP about the environment and ensure that other people know of the importance of reducing carbon footprints.

Why do I care? Why should you care? How does this affect me, you, and our families right now? Essentially, what is in it for me? Well, let us talk money. If we can reduce the amount we spend on everyday things we need, there will be more money to spend on video games, shopping, and general entertainment. Specifically, let us talk about the ordinary heating of a house. If a normal family can reduce its heating bill by 15 percent just by insulating the home, getting rid of draughts, wrapping the hot-water cylinder, changing light bulbs, and turning off the TV, video, and PC when not in use, then it can mean more money for the family. It will mean a warmer, nicer home, and stop asthma and bronchial complaints. This will mean fewer trips to the doctor, meaning fewer medicines to take, meaning fewer beds in a hospital. We can have all these benefits for such a little effort.

What else is in it for me? It will mean a reduction in acid oceans. What is important about that? Currently, shellfish and all those other creatures in the food chain that have a direct link back to shellfish are having trouble surviving as carbon dioxide in the ocean changes the water, making it more acid. As a direct consequence their shells cannot become hard enough for the shellfish to survive. We can, and we must, do something about climate change now. Is it urgent? You betcha! In the words of JFK: “For, in the final analysis, our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this small planet. We all breathe the same air, we all cherish our children’s future, and we are all mortal.” Thank you.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): I invite another member to take the call. Can I say, just by way of information to colleagues, that when another member has sat down and you are on the Order Paper as the next speaker, you should rise straight away and seek the call—say “Mr Speaker”.

SHAUN KENNEDY (List): I speak now to all of those who believe in the essence of this bill, and to all of those who, as it were, believe in the doughnut method, as it was so aptly put—sweet on the inside, but it has a hole. I am going to speak of this hole. Apparently, this hole is not enough. It is only a small step, but it is a step in the right direction. We cannot take just one step, but to take two steps we have to first take one step.

We were reminded before that this is a bureaucracy, and forms need to be filled out. If anyone has seen *Hitch-hiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*, which I am sure you all have, there are a lot of those forms, and a bureaucracy takes time. How much time will it be before those of you who are apprehensive deny this bill, or before another one relating to climate change is brought back in?

We have only 4 years in which to fulfil our requirement to the Kyoto Protocol—lest we feel its wrath. Four years is not long enough to import the number of buses it will

take; nor is it long enough to install as many solar heating devices as we need. But it is long enough to make a start with this bill.

It is time for the public to help make a stand, and we offer an incentive in a form that every New Zealander loves: the tax credit system. Let us face it. Who does not want to save money? We heard it during the general debate on Monday. Tax is a huge, huge point of discussion in this Chamber. Whether we have a flat rate of tax, whether we get rid of our current system, is a matter of major opinion in the public polls. It is a huge campaign matter for certain parties. This combines the two pressing issues. It brings them together in an attractive form for the New Zealand public to make a stand to help the environment, without having to go nuclear.

New Zealand is a beautiful, environmentally aware, nuclear-free country. If we wish for it to stay this way, then I say that we say yes to this bill, because it is the step we need. Someone has to get the ball rolling, and I ask all of us here to do so.

JAZ MORRIS (List): I seek leave to table a document showing the intention of many members of this House to abstain on the vote.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): Well, the House is master of its own destiny, so I will put it to the House, and it will depend on how the House votes. The member has asked for leave to table that document, but leave can be denied. It is up to the House. Leave is sought. Is there any objection? The document cannot be tabled because there has been an objection.

LAUREN KILKOLLY (List): The debate on whether climate change is happening has long since been concluded. We know that climate change is happening around us. It can be seen by the multiple civil defence emergencies that have been brought about in Northland and Taranaki at present. It is happening right now, and it is time for us to take action. Do we really want to be 50 years old and thinking: “You know what—I did have a chance to make a stand. I could have done something.”, and regretting the fact that we did not take that moment? We can make a difference from this point.

I acknowledge that the bill does not go anywhere near as far as we need it to go. It will not make the global impact that we as New Zealanders need it to make, but it can lead to bigger bills. So if we allow this bill to pass, it can create awareness.

Yes, we do need bigger forms of energy. This bill concentrates only on the end-user, the person using the electricity. It would be more vital to look at where that electricity comes from in the first place. We need to look at solar power. We need to look at putting turbines in Cook Strait, and at whether nuclear power can be proved to be safe. If we can find something to do with that waste, then that will be the better option. *[Interruption]* I said “If it can be proved”—I ask members, please, to listen to what I say. From here we can have research into doing this, and that may be a better way for us to spend our money.

This bill can create awareness. It can get an entire country, including smaller towns, realising that global warming is upon us. We can get them realising that if we do not act now and do not make a difference right now, then the world will become a very different place. If this bill can do that, then it will be classed as a success, because from there it can let people, the rest of society, make the stand to ensure that further bills are passed, and that this is not the end but only the beginning of a long journey in our fight against climate change. We should vote for this bill if only to create awareness amongst our communities.

ANNA LEE (List): Our world is changing. We do not need to see the next *Transformers* movie to view a transformation. We are experiencing transformation as our Earth morphs into something else; something we cannot entirely predict with certainty. Right now, in 2007, the levels of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere are greater than any we have seen in the past 400,000 years. Nobody is disputing the fact that

carbon dioxide levels are rising. Sea levels are increasing, animal extinction is occurring at a rate that nobody has seen before, and our Pacific Island neighbours are slowly being engulfed in water as the sea level rises.

This issue is not a frivolous one, yet it is still surrounded by uncertainty as to whether humans and their burning of fossil fuels is the major driving force behind this change. Even if humans are not entirely responsible for our changing climate, we can do no harm by reducing our carbon emissions and slowing down this process. However, in the scale of things, New Zealand is a very new and very tiny country. We contribute, in total, less than 0.5 percent to the Earth's total carbon levels. If we managed to cut out our emissions entirely so that we had no carbon whatsoever, more than 99.5 percent of the problem would remain. Our efforts alone are fruitless unless all countries are on board.

Two-thirds of the emissions are produced by only 10 countries. The United States of America alone produces nearly 25 percent of carbon emissions. New Zealand has justification in waiting to see what the big players do. There is no point in jumping off a bridge to save the world if the world does not even notice that one is gone. We are a small nation, and a bill like this will have big effects. It is a complicated bill and an expensive one. The cost of implementing it will come from where? Taxpayers' money? We are already highly taxed, and we do not need to increase this amount further. Why not use the money to further research, educate, and promote the world? I know you say: "Anna, we all know about climate change. How much more education do we need?", but this is not the case in all countries of the world.

I support New Zealand's being a sustainable country, and I think that New Zealand does need to make a positive change. However, the bill is expensive and complex, and there are other, better ways to effectively spend our money, such as on research, promotion, and education. New Zealand is, and can remain, a leader. Let us influence others to make a positive change.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): I advise members that the attendants have been asked to pass a large number of messages to other members in the Chamber and that, of course, is the normal practice. However, I would also inform members that they are free to move about the Chamber themselves, as long as they do not disturb proceedings or cause unnecessary distractions. Members should use the delivery service only for serious matters before the House, and they should be reasonable with their requests.

ELLA EDGINTON (Hutt South): I seek leave to table a notice of my intention to abstain from the vote later on.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): Is there any objection to that course of action being taken? There is. The member cannot do so.

EDWARD BROWNLEE (Northcote): I raise a point of order, Mr Speaker. That was the second time the same document was sought to be tabled by a member. I believe that there may be a tactic being developed whereby members are seeking leave to table documents and wasting the time of the House. I believe that seeking to table the same document repeatedly is out of order, and I would just ask you to rule on that, Mr Assistant Speaker.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): I advise the member that to continually raise frivolous points of order can lead to disorder, and if members continue to seek leave for something that has been denied, then that can be considered as a frivolous interjection.

DANIEL LUONI (Clutha-Southland): The fight against climate change is this generation's great war, and this bill is New Zealand's attempt to fight it. But what is it all about? Basically, it promotes the use of carbon accounts and tax incentives as a

means of reducing the country's levels of carbon emissions. But because it is so uninspiring, I have found it to be useless in its current form. The incentives are weak and there are no factors to deal with households that are not reducing their levels of carbon emissions.

The most significant reason that I believe this bill will prove ineffective is that it is not appealing enough to entice the majority of New Zealand households to join the scheme—or, to put it figuratively, the carrot is not juicy enough. This is because the scheme is entirely voluntary, and for any potential tax rebate to occur, volunteers would have to pay for any conversions, pay any fees for joining the scheme, and keep check of their own power use. To top things off, they would then be given the miserly maximum tax rebate of \$500. This is not a carrot that the majority of New Zealanders would even attempt to obtain.

Before what this legislation is suggesting can become viable, punitive action needs to be brought into place to force people to change. If the price of ecologically unfriendly fuels were to be driven to the level at which they were the fiscally unviable option, climate change solutions would become infinitively more probable. To keep to my metaphor, the stick must be used. This would be best achieved by putting further taxes on the price of fossil fuels, so that only the most determined environmental terrorist would still choose to drive with reckless abandon. Electricity and gas prices should also become markedly more expensive, after a limit determined by the need of the household, in order to punish excess consumption.

After prices of ecologically unfriendly fuels have been driven to a level where they are the fiscally unviable option, the bill will be able to reach its true potential, but first it must be changed so that the financial burden to reduce carbon emissions is not placed on the volunteer but on the Government. If the Government were to make the price of energy-efficient vehicles and appliances more affordable, people would actively join the carbon credit tax rebate scheme, as it would genuinely save them money.

The basic principle of my strategy advocates using the synergy of the stick and the carrot to urge the people of New Zealand to reduce their carbon emissions. The only possible problem that could feasibly exist is that it may not be the most popular option, and it may see the governing party that implements it suffer. It is here that I would urge members to put aside any opportunity for political manoeuvring and do what is right over what is popular.

ALANNAH MANSON (Epsom): Who was the first country to give women the vote? A scientist from which country split the atom? Which country went against the tide of popular opinion with its stance on nuclear-powered warships? It was little old Aotearoa—a David, if you like, who is not afraid to stand up against Goliath countries and tell them what we really think. Now our country is facing what some suggest is the biggest environmental issue of our time, hence bills such as the Household Response to Climate Change Bill.

But before we take any policy action, it is imperative we question where this issue has come from. Have we taken notice of our most famous and revered climate scientists? How many people have simply swallowed without question every word of Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth*? I am not going to regurgitate the gloomy figures that we are force-fed in the papers every morning; today we will hear the other side.

The real inconvenient truth is that the widely held belief that man-made emissions are causing climate change is not agreed on by all New Zealand scientists and experts. There is no consensus of scientific evidence. There has been much criticism of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's climate change models, from which many of the predictions for the world's warming are drawn. Even though these models have been in use since the 1990s, none of them have predicted any of the global

temperatures since. Why do we consider a model that ignores vital pieces of information a dependable source? We can barely trust models used for predicting the next few days of weather, so how can we put our faith in a model that claims to predict temperatures in the next 50 or 100 years?

There is also the issue of the Kyoto Protocol. Since New Zealand ratified the protocol in 2002, the estimated cost has been put at \$1 billion more than was originally estimated. Furthermore, an independent study has indicated that even if all countries reach their targets, it may make the world only from 0.06 to 0.11 of a degree Celsius cooler by 2100. Is such a tiny effect worth the billions of dollars it potentially could cost?

In essence, we are debating a bill to meet a protocol that may cost New Zealand over \$1 billion more than was previously estimated, regarding an issue that scientists cannot even agree exists. For New Zealand to use hasty solutions when the problem is not yet even defined, is ridiculous. Let us not blindly follow the examples of people who may be wrong. Instead, let us discover for ourselves. Thank you.

KIMAYA McINTOSH (Taupo): Under the Kyoto Protocol New Zealand must, between 2008 and 2012, reduce its emissions level to the same level it was 17 years ago in 1990. This means a reduction of 25 percent. New Zealand's emissions can be improved by targeting households and creating a carbon account for each household—based on the number of people living in the home and of special cases such as support machines—and giving the incentive of tax credits. However, other incentives will need to be considered to make the plan appeal to business and industry, and to make it appeal more to everyday people.

The only way in which New Zealand will achieve this, or get close to the 25 percent fewer emissions, is to really make the idea appeal to the whole nation. Without big incentives, and without a real reason for hitting their targets, households will not do it. Everyday people will not be interested unless there is a lot more in it for them. But if the incentives are worth it, and if people start to realise that their emissions are affecting the climate, the majority of the nation will keep to, or under, their carbon accounts. In doing so, they will bring New Zealand's emissions close to the target of a reduction of 25 percent.

Climate change will affect the future greatly in some way or another, whether or not people believe in it. Even if we act now with this bill, climate change will still hit and affect us. But if New Zealand gets close to getting its emissions down by 25 percent, we may be able to start something with this bill that future generations of this country can carry on.

ANNA MEIKLE (Taranaki - King Country): It is predicted that by the year 2050 Mt Everest will be barren rock, over 1 billion people will face a life without water, and 40 percent of the world's water supply, running from the Himalayas, will be dry. The year 2050 is well within our lifetime, and still people are not getting the message that climate change is affecting, and will continue to affect, every inch of the planet.

We have been told time and time again that every little bit—recycling, car pooling, and switching off the telly—will stop the looming giant that is global warming. But I stand before members today to tell them that it is too late. Today I hope to persuade them that although reduced carbon emissions from New Zealanders will reduce our ecological footprint, and hopefully prevent us from paying a hefty penalty, we cannot hope to tackle climate change if only a small percentage of the world's population is willing to do so.

A recent survey conducted in the UK revealed that most Britons are more worried about crime, graffiti, and dog mess than they are about climate change.

Hon Member: Are we in the UK?

ANNA MEIKLE: I have the floor. Fifty-one percent of these people believe that climate change will have little or no effect on them as individuals. More than one-third admitted that they were taking no action whatsoever to reduce their carbon emissions. These are the people of Mother England—a country with a population that is 20 times greater than our own. If this is the general attitude of more than half of the people in the UK, then our far-flung nation's good intentions will not make even a dent in the reduction of global carbon emissions.

Even if we do, it is too late. In 2001, Stephen Hawking predicted that within 1,000 years Earth would become Venus—an inhospitable, sweltering hothouse that underwent a sudden runaway climate change. If carbon emissions continue to be produced at the rate they are now, Hawking says we will have no choice but to leave the planet. Even if mankind does make every effort to clean up and reduce greenhouse gases, the Earth still will not be saved. As he says, the damage already done is irreversible.

This is further supported by an article on the BBC website, which states that if we stop all carbon emissions immediately we will still be waiting 100 years for existing gases to disperse. That would be roughly the year 2100—50 years after the water from the Himalayas would have dried up.

So our hopes lie in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, yet that agreement does not propose global carbon reductions anywhere near the amount needed to stabilise climate change, and that is a fact. So the concept of New Zealand tackling climate change could be compared to one man standing on a beach trying to stop a tsunami. Thank you.

AMELIA MORGAN (List): New Zealanders are lazy. Let us face it: our clean, green image is no more than a myth. We use remotes instead of turning off the TV at the wall; we insist on leaving the lights on, even if we are not in the room; and we drive cars, not as a luxury but as a necessity.

New Zealanders must accept that we are all obliged to change our attitudes and realise that our actions are burdening our environment. We must begin to understand that our lifestyles are threatening New Zealand's future. It is the actions that we have or have not taken that have developed this nation into a ticking time bomb of environmental destruction. We have seen the images of the Antarctic ice breaking up and of icebergs floating off our coastlines, so why are we not making the choices that will benefit our country and reduce our collective carbon footprint? In many small ways this is possible. Can each of us go home tonight and be the one to take responsibility for turning off the lights we do not need? It is these small things that will make or break our country.

Our overall aim under the Kyoto Protocol of reducing our greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2012 can be achieved only by the whole nation participating—individuals, businesses, and, of course, the Government. The Government must take the first steps and lead by example, consuming the appropriate products and taking the right steps that it expects the typical New Zealander to take.

Although the Government's proposal to introduce carbon accounts and tax credits is appropriate, I believe there is more it should do to enforce our nation's attitude change. Funding for education and advertising within schools and communities about how our lifestyle should adapt to the situation we are now in will be an important step in reducing our ecological footprints. Individuals throughout New Zealand will become aware of their damaging lifestyles.

And why is the Government not targeting the main generator of household carbon emissions—that is, vehicle use? Take my family, for example: four people, two drivers, and three cars. This is the lifestyle we live in the 21st century, and I do not see it changing any time soon, unless the Government takes immediate action. Although

better and cheaper public transport is the obvious answer, I believe that a more aggressive way of defeating this problem would be to ban the importation of vehicles with large engines. Also, cash subsidies should be available for fuel-efficient, low-emission cars, so that we rid our roads of the older, high-emission vehicles.

So next time any of us leave the light on when we walk out of a room, or unnecessarily drive to wherever we have to go, we should think about how these tiny things are killing our environment. If all 121 of us go out there today and try to prevent these little things, it will make a difference. There are ways of reducing this damage, and it starts with every individual realising how these little things are burdening our nation. Thank you.

JAMES SLEEP (List): I seek the leave of the House to table a petition of abstaining members—*[Interruption]*

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): I just remind members that when a point of order is being heard, it is to be heard in silence. Also, it is to be terse and to the point, otherwise the member himself risks interjection.

JAMES SLEEP: Can I start again, Mr Assistant Speaker?

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): Yes, you can.

JAMES SLEEP: I seek the leave of the House to table a document, which is a petition of abstaining members on the Household Response to Climate Change Bill.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): The member is entitled to seek leave, but it has already been done twice. As I have already mentioned, Speaker's ruling 20/1—and if the member has a copy in his box there, he should look at it—states: "Constantly raising trifling points of order is itself disorderly." If the member does that too much he can be sent out. In fact, I will show him one of these—a yellow card. He has had one. If he gets another one, he is out.

JAZ MORRIS (List): Many in this House would take it as read that a Youth MP in a Green MP's seat would support legislation with the potential to reduce New Zealand's carbon emissions. The bill before us today seeks to reduce approximately 1 percent of our carbon emissions—that is, 10 percent of the 10 percent of emissions caused by our households.

Many members here today have reminded us of the fact that the Kyoto Protocol wishes us to reduce these emissions by 25 percent. Do we really want a cost of \$250 million for each percentage? I am not suggesting that that is the only alternative. There are much, much better and cheaper ways of reducing our emissions. What we have to see is that this Youth Parliament must consider the efficacy of this legislation in terms of having any meaningful impact on helping New Zealand reach its Kyoto Protocol commitments or, indeed, on the 90 percent reduction figures touted by some scientists. A voluntary reduction of 1 percent is pointless, other than as a start. What it shows is that the group that put this bill before the Youth Parliament is gutless.

When I ticked a box saying: "Climate Change, How can New Zealand reduce its ecological footprint?" as the matter for debate, I expected to debate a bill that would reduce our environmental footprint. It is symptomatic of the reluctance of this Government that we are debating today a bill drawn up by some pencil pusher in a pathetic attempt to have a semblance of efficacy. This bill is worthless. It will achieve little. It sums up the lack of willingness of the Government to let youth debate a bill to combat climate change. This bill sets no international example. It barely reduces our emissions, and I would wager that the paper used in printing this bill contains a greater carbon sink than would the results of the bill.

The proposed \$250 million cost with an 80 percent uptake is more than what is spent yearly on public transport and could be invested in renewable generation, so we can close the Huntly coal-fired power station and Solid Energy. This assumes, however, that

the cost of climate change is a mere \$250 million per annum. Clearly, in a nation with a military budget of well over a billion dollars and an America's Cup budget of \$30 million, this is despicable. Our priorities are nothing short of pathetic, and I can only hope that when the oil runs out and perhaps we do not need cars, we take a look at our spending. If we were to channel wasteful spending into sustainable spending, perhaps we would reach 90 percent, and perhaps we would reach sustainability.

As long as we sit here debating a cheap, last-minute bill we are all hypocrites.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): The member may not use the word starting with "h".

JAZ MORRIS: I withdraw and apologise. Where, members, is a real bill for debate? Where is the bill to ban sport utility vehicles? Where is the bill to close Huntly, to ban motor sport, and to tax petrol to the point where it is too expensive to contribute to climate change? In giving us this politically correct, not-too-major, not-too-expensive bill, the Government admits it cannot be bothered doing anything worthwhile.

Honourable members, climate change is not caused by the carbon emissions but by the apathy within the Government to not reduce those emissions. I do not support this bill. It is not good enough, and the Green Party Youth MPs will abstain, as will many other members of this House, from voting on the bill. We are not in a war on terror. It is our unjustifiable lifestyles that fight a war with our environment. Do we have the guts to change it?

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): The member cannot challenge the courage of any other member. He will withdraw and apologise.

JAZ MORRIS: I withdraw and apologise.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): Thank you. Has the member finished?

JAZ MORRIS: Yes.

DHEVAKSHA NAIDOO (List): New Zealand's environment is a taonga, a treasure beyond price. It is our inheritance, our economic base, our playground, and our home. As New Zealanders, we have a great deal worth protecting: our precious natural resources, our unique flora and fauna, our world-renowned scenery, and our way of life. All of these, which form the New Zealand we are proud of, are being threatened each day because our climate is changing. It requires a global effort to reduce the greenhouse gases that are heating up our planet. We may be a small country, but we have enough taonga to make a sacrifice for and to save. We can still make a difference. One step in the right direction is better than no step anywhere.

The Ministry for the Environment has a vision and a mission. Its vision is for a healthy environment that sustains nature and people; its mission is delivering the environment that sustains nature and people. A few years ago we could have said that we were only an arm's length away from achieving this mission, but we now have one vital factor to consider: our climate is changing. It seems now that this mission would be far beyond our reach, but is it really? And should we be striving for anything less?

It all comes down to our actions. Small acts have big impacts. Climate change may seem a complex issue, but how we respond to it will determine the shape of our future, our economy, our environment, and our communities. Tackling climate change is a win-win situation for all. Our climate is changing. Climate change may seem a complex issue, but we can challenge climate change. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi: "We must be the change we want to see in the world."

MATTHEW NEARY (Tamaki): Ladies and gentlemen, as many have already said today, we as New Zealanders contribute under 1 percent of the total greenhouse gases emitted into the atmosphere, while other countries such as America, China, and India contribute altogether two-thirds of this. So, really, this is not our problem—correct?

Well, there is a quote in a very old book that says that he who is without sin should cast the first stone.

Although we may only contribute under 1 percent of greenhouse gases, this is still 1 percent too much. We must aim for perfection, even though this can inevitably never be reached, so that other countries will follow. Some members have said today that New Zealand is too small to influence other countries. Well, I have to tell fellow MPs that this statement is bollocks. The fact of the matter is that we in New Zealand have influenced other countries many times before. We were the ones who split the atom—although this may have influenced other countries in a negative way, it was still an influence. We are also the leaders in digital effects for film, and we have other countries like big America copying us. This legislation—even if it is only a small step—also has the power to influence the world.

However, in saying that, this legislation is only a short-term solution, and we must look for a longer-term solution. As Kiwis, we claim to be innovative backyard geniuses, yet what other power sources have we come up with to oppose nuclear power? If we do not come up with something else, then we will have to accept nuclear power. Some members seem to have a very naive view about nuclear power, as if their only knowledge of it is the disgusting power station they see on *The Simpsons*. Yes, nuclear power does have some problems associated with it, such as waste, but it is actually a very economical and powerful source, and if we cannot come up with anything else, it is something that we will have to use. With that, I will end. Thank you.

SUSANNAH NEILD (Palmerston North): New Zealand has a serious carbon emissions problem. Thanks to the Government of 1990 we are a signatory to the Kyoto Protocol and we have pledged to reduce our total carbon emissions to the level they were in 1990, or better. Unless we make drastic changes we will have to foot a bill of an estimated \$557 million to avoid losing our credibility as a responsible global citizen and environmentally conscious nation, and to proactively protect our trade from any trade barriers.

Unfortunately, a handful of carbon-aware Kiwis working their butts off to save 10 percent of their energy use is unlikely to have a tangible or substantial impact on our carbon emissions. I believe that there is a choice that we as a nation must make. We should either all go for a household reduction in greenhouse emissions, with every New Zealander making a conscious and compulsory effort to reduce significantly our carbon emissions, or just ditch this idea of reducing our household emissions and instead focus on a few significant projects and forest-planting initiatives.

It does not make much sense to introduce a voluntary scheme where a household might get a maximum of \$500 annually for taking the risk of an unknown compliance cost and a possible penalty for consuming what authorities consider excessive amounts of energy, and its contribution to reducing New Zealand's total greenhouses gases is a joke, although it may give some people a warm fuzzy feeling that they are doing their part to save the planet. Furthermore, why limit each household to a maximum incentive of \$500? Do we not want the big, unnecessary users to make big savings? As for the administrators, the inspectors, the bureaucracy, and the invasion of privacy, no New Zealander will buy that. If we truly need household savings in addition to energy projects and tree-planting initiatives, we need to get every New Zealander involved—that is, it would be non-voluntary—and we would need a much simpler administrative system.

A simple scheme of carbon credits on all non-renewable energy with a rebate allowance for every citizen will force bigger users to pay, trade, or enter into offset schemes such as tree planting, while a minimum carbon rebate allocated to pensioners

and lower-income earners could offset the cost for them, making it a much more viable system for all New Zealanders.

LOREN O'SULLIVAN (List): We have learnt a lot at this Youth Parliament. We have learnt that nuclear energy is not the way forward. In fact, we have learnt that climate change is a reality. What we also need to learn is that by abstaining we are not helping the planet. Members should not waste their votes. We cannot and should not let this bill slip through our fingers. It has the potential for change. It is not perfect, but it is a much-needed start. There has been a lot of talk in this Chamber. I can see that this debate could go on forever while we suffocate on our own pollution.

We as New Zealanders have not seen any real leadership from the Government. This bill is a start—a modest one, I admit, but it is a start for an exponential growth in green houses and green cities, and, eventually, for a green world. It all starts at home. We all know this. We know that if we adopt green practices in our own homes, this will be passed on to the next generation. Let us not be swayed by the Green Party's radical approach. We never listen to them anyway.

Jaz Morris: I raise a point of order, Mr Speaker. What is your ruling on whether this is an offensive use of words by member.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): The member will be seated. Parliamentary debate is very robust.

LOREN O'SULLIVAN: If we gave the Green Party ultimate control of our Government it would be a communist, totalitarian Government by tomorrow. Do we want that? No.

Jaz Morris: I raise a point of order, Mr Speaker. If the previous statement was not offensive, that one surely was. What is your ruling?

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): We are in a parliamentary democracy. Debate is often robust in the House. The member has taken offence. I am inclined to let it pass, and I am going to. But I ask the member to be careful with her use of language.

LOREN O'SULLIVAN: We want change to ultimately come from the people, not the law—hence this bill appearing to be watered down so it is easy to swallow. New Zealand is currently facing a negative attitude from the older generation. When asking my mum about climate change, she said to me: “I do not care. I'll be long dead anyway.” What kind of an attitude is this? As Shrek says, layers are important. To me the solution to climate change is like an onion. It is layered, with one layer leading to another. Without one layer, we cannot progress. So we will fight this in the paddocks, in the hospitals, in our schools, and, most important, in our homes. We the individuals of Aotearoa New Zealand will fight global warming, and we will never surrender.

KATE PRIMROSE (Hawke's Bay): I admire Nelly Furtado, not because she can get her krump on, but because she is an advocate for turning off the lights. Yes, some members may know her song, *Turn Off The Lights*, and I would sing it to members today if I had not been told by Jennifer Smith to stop singing during lunchtime. Now, on to my speech.

Climate change is happening and it is now. I heard a member earlier in the debate say: “Let's do nothing.” Well, it is too late. We can no longer do nothing. What will people do when they wake up in bed and are surrounded by water? They will regret the day they made that statement.

The bill up for debate proposes that each household should voluntarily reduce its carbon emissions, and there are tax credits for those who successfully reduce their emissions. I wholeheartedly support this bill. Encouraging ordinary New Zealanders like you and me to recognise climate change and take accountability for reducing our carbon emissions aligns with my belief in the adage “Think global, act local”.

As it stands, the commitment made by the New Zealand Government through the Kyoto Protocol means little to the general public. It seems that the Kiwi response to climate change is very fragmented. Businesses such as Woolworths, where I work, are committed to cutting down their bag usage, but at that supermarket I am on everyone's hit list because I refuse to give people a bag.

Hybrid cars are being promoted by firms such as Toyota, and then there are the "Take the bus" campaigns in the larger urban cities. But "Joe and Josephine Public" still think a carbon footprint is something they get when their barbecue falls over.

We need clear guidelines and incentives for the general public to reduce their carbon emissions. The average household in New Zealand generates 4.19 tonnes of carbon dioxide each year, with 3,280 kilograms coming from vehicle use.

We need to make sure the education that goes with the bill is just as important as the incentives given. The ways New Zealanders can cut energy usage need to be clearly identified. The implementation of a school resource kit with curriculum links should be introduced.

There is no time like the present. We need to act now to reduce the effects of climate change. We should vote for this bill to create awareness of climate change and to set the ball rolling. I quote the honourable Dhevaksha Naidoo: "One step in the right direction is better than no step anywhere."

SHAUN RITCHIE (North Shore): As we have heard repeatedly, climate change is no laughing matter but, to be fair, the Household Response to Climate Change Bill is a joke: voluntary household carbon accounts and tax incentives—just barely—for domestic reduction of energy. I would like to quote the Cabinet Policy Committee proposal on the bill at hand: "Because it is voluntary, it reduces the potential for negative reaction on the basis of perceived State 'intrusion'." How weak! In fact, because it is voluntary it simply will not happen. There is a mind-set in New Zealand that voluntary means "I don't need to bother.", and that is the prevailing wind, I am afraid.

Households are already encouraged to reduce energy emissions, energy consumption, and energy use. We all know about the Kyoto Protocol and energy-saving programmes. Nobody likes a high power bill and we all hate power cuts. All this bill is doing is formalising this encouragement, and that will achieve little.

The tax incentive maximum of \$500 is pathetic. It is not much of an incentive to those households who are most likely to take part—namely, the upper and upper-middle-class households in our country.

Gareth Veale: New Zealand doesn't have a class system.

SHAUN RITCHIE: Perceived classes—the class system exists. People in lower socio-economic areas of New Zealand, who would clearly benefit most from such tax incentives, lack the initiative—and often the skills—to take part in this programme.

So what action should we take? As I said, there are three options. The first one is that we strengthen the bill by making it more than just a formal encouragement, and increase incentives. The second is that we scrap the bill altogether, because it is weak and toothless. The third one is that we move to nuclear power.

The cost of administering this legislation—the issue of smart cards, the processing of application forms will be significant—*[Interruption]*

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): Cell phones are not—*[Interruption]* It is a harmonica? Well, it is not permitted in the Chamber and the member who has it will please turn it off or take it out. The member will stand, withdraw, and apologise for bringing Parliament into disrepute. We do not need that sort of thing here.

Gwilym Breese: I am sorry, Mr Speaker.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): Thank you.

SHAUN RITCHIE: So not only is the cost to the Government great but the cost to the individual, both monetarily and in time, is significant, and the overall efficacy of the bill is far from concrete and substantial, let alone guaranteed.

In light of this view of the issues and concerns surrounding the bill, I urge the House to consider carefully the necessity for such weak and redundant legislation. There is little that can be built on this legislation. Many such first steps and steps in the right direction are foreseeable, but they are weak and pathetic, and we will be left with a collection of weak and pathetic Acts that achieve little if this first step is all we can suggest.

The issue of climate change and its significance needs to be considered again more holistically before we are left with a collation of nebulous and disjointed initiatives that achieve little. Nuclear power is the way forward; we need to look at alternative methods of energy.

PAULINE ROBERTSON (Christchurch Central): We have all contributed to the problem and we all have a vital role to play in the solution. Peak oil, climate change, and resource wars are not the problems; they are the symptoms. The real problem is a high-energy, overly consumerist way of life. The real tragedy is that although promising us happiness, fulfilment, and independence, this way of life leaves us stressed, empty, isolated, and addicted to material possessions.

So what is the solution? Should we pursue the incentive scheme put forward by this bill, which uses our weaknesses, greed, and self-interest to create leverage for a cleaner environment? I believe so. The Household Response to Climate Change Bill carries an important message. We cannot afford to sit back and not take action on the current climate crisis.

In 2001 the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority released a report, which stated that Aotearoa had the capacity to produce three times our current energy needs with wind, using only 1 percent of our land. Sustainability is a core part of our Government policy, and it should be a core part of the policy of our cities, towns, rural areas, communities, homes, and, finally, of the individual. We need to act now. If we develop our wind power capability, in conjunction with energy efficiency, conservation, and education schemes, I believe we can greatly reduce our forecasted Kyoto debt.

I would like to mention another economical, easy suggestion: improved public transport. I know that when some of the members here think of public transport they inwardly cringe. There is no reason for this. New Zealand demographics show that people are reasonably concentrated in urban areas, so public transport could easily be implemented in these areas.

I will not support this bill. I support the idea behind it, but I believe that it must be a mandatory and integral part of the New Zealand way of life. Having an overall trend line that sets out household levels of power use, relative to the maximum desired energy use of a household of a particular size, and that states whether that household is managing to decrease the overall amount of energy it is using, should enable that household to trade in carbon credits or take part in another incentive scheme. We must be the change we want to see. Efficiency, conservation, improved public transport, education, incentives, and wind power are all ways we can achieve this.

LUKE CRAVEN (List): I seek leave to table a document from the Youth Parliament Rules, stating the voting procedures set out in Youth Parliament Standing Orders 42 to 49. This shows the procedure followed for a personal vote among members of Parliament, stating that they are not expected to vote with their party, as I feel is happening today. So I seek leave to table this document.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): When a point of order is on the floor, it is to be heard in silence; otherwise members might like to be ejected for a few minutes. Is there any objection to that document being tabled? There is. The member will be seated. Thank you.

NATALIE ROBINSON (List): Household response to climate change is not something my background has prepared me for, and I must admit that it is not a subject in which I originally felt any interest. However, I started to ask for opinions from my peers and from other members of my community. That not only showed me that there is an interest in the issue amongst my peers—as demonstrated by the previous enthusiastic speakers—but also highlighted for me the one comment that most of the people I talked to had on the bill: “It’s a good idea, but I wouldn’t do it.” Although none of the people I questioned disagreed with the idea of the bill or with reducing our carbon emissions, they felt that calling for a household’s voluntary creation of a carbon credit account would not see results being widely achieved in our country.

Today I speak as a representative of my community, which is a small rural Northland town with a low socioeconomic status. This bill states that the amount by which a household will need to reduce its emissions is variable, depending on the size of the household and on any special needs that that household may have. Is it therefore safe to say that houses in relatively poverty-stricken areas will be granted special circumstances? This bill states that it will give a rebate to a household of up to half the amount it spends on converting to more ecologically efficient technologies. But asking a household to foot even half of those costs seems to be purely wishful thinking, when one considers that these are households that consider a \$2-a-week rubbish disposal charge to be way too expensive.

Although I do support the desired outcome of this bill—and I do think that immediate action needs to be undertaken by us to reduce our carbon emissions and to combat climate change—I feel that more forceful legislation needs to be passed. I believe that relying on a voluntary system to try to lower our carbon emissions will not see strong results. In areas such as my own, I believe that we must learn to walk before we attempt to run. I ask that attention be given to certain towns or districts, to ensure that efforts in carbon reduction are equally high at the regional and national levels. Therefore, although I initially felt that this legislation was a good idea, I believe that when put into action it would not achieve high results, as the incentive contained in the bill does not seem designed for large-scale change. I believe that stricter laws are needed for New Zealand to meet the goals set down by the Kyoto Protocol and to reduce our carbon emission levels. Thank you.

SANDRA SAMUEL (Mana): Talofa. E muamua lava ona ou sii le viiga I le Atua aua ua tatou potopoto ile nei aso male manuia.

[Greetings. First of all, I give praise to the Lord for this wonderful gathering.]

Climate change is a very real, very serious threat. It is one of the harshest realities in our lives today, tomorrow, and maybe forever. An ecological footprint is defined as the measure of the load imposed by a given population on nature. Now, how can we as New Zealanders reduce this load? There is a large discrepancy in the amount of greenhouse emissions between industrialised countries and poorer, undeveloped countries. More specifically, industrialised countries are responsible for approximately 80 percent of the carbon dioxide build-up in the environment. So should the aim not be to target the industrialised countries, and to urge people to make a personal commitment to combat climate change by taking action to strive to reduce, reuse, and recycle their carbon footprints in their daily lives, and, most important, to help to save the world that we ourselves are destroying? Although we cannot rely on those countries to suddenly do all

the things necessary to reduce climate change—because, let us face it, old habits die hard—we need to take action now, because climate change is happening now.

Although New Zealand contributes only a small percentage of emissions in comparison with the rest of the world, why do we not make that small percentage even smaller? Why do we not become a role model to other industrialised countries? Why do we not do all that we can to tackle this issue before it scores? Some of the undeveloped countries that are at the greatest risk of climate change are our neighbours, and for some of us here today, and for many New Zealanders, they are our homes—they are the Pacific Islands. Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, and the Cook Islands are especially at risk if our attitudes towards climate change are not changed themselves. It is imperative that changes be made in both our everyday lifestyle and the global economy, to prevent any further damage. I mean, we spend all day walking around our air-conditioned homes with all the lights on, the fridge door continually left open, and every single appliance left on standby.

This issue is real, and we as a country, and the world, do not realise the consequences of our actions. The statistics are staggering. If roughly one million people switched to three energy-efficient light bulbs, that would be equivalent to taking 100,000 cars off the road. Action and understanding, as well as awareness, need to take place.

This bill is here and now, and if we continue to say that bills are “rubbish” and need to be recycled, then what will we have to improve on? How can we balance the positives and negatives if the provisions of this bill are not performed? We will never know, unless we try. We need to start somewhere, or we will continue to go nowhere. Thank you.

ANAS SIRAJUR RAHEEM (Pakuranga): I will keep this short. New Zealand is rated 11th in the world for per capita greenhouse gas emissions. The problem exists, and has been established. Without a doubt, the climate change issue is a serious long-term problem—one not to be taken lightly.

Having said that, I tell members that the framework of the bill we debate today is impractical. We must not forget that although New Zealand’s greenhouse gas emissions are relatively small, our climate is also very much affected by emissions produced globally. Therefore, we should look to influence large global emitters through international agreements and action. As a trading nation, we need to be ready to be on the same footing as our trading partners. We need to be looking at increasing the use of renewable energy, and at being efficient in our use of energy. We need to be looking into alternatives to the carbon tax, and at cross-sector initiatives. Money should be injected into researching alternative energy sources.

New Zealand is unique, compared with other developed countries, because half of our emissions come from the agricultural sector. In that sector we should be focusing on research to reduce emissions from livestock, and on research into agricultural practices. Measures must be taken to address the trend to harvest trees. Further, we should look into the development of measures to encourage new plantings. Those measures, in turn, will also ensure that other environmental benefits, such as improved water quality and more efficient farming practices, are provided.

Reducing emissions is a challenging task, but we must be determined to play our part in the global effort. That requires innovation and ingenuity, which New Zealanders have proven to be good at. Ultimately, it will be the small steps taken by individuals, supported by the bigger steps of Governments and businesses around the world, that will make the difference. Thank you.

JAMES SLEEP (List): The Household Response to Climate Change Bill is, of course, a voluntary initiative, encouraging households to reduce their carbon emissions. This bill is addressing the issue of climate change and I support the principles of the

bill, but I would have liked to see the bill go much, much further. It is the wealthy who emit most emissions into our atmosphere, and I do not believe that they would change their lifestyles for the chance of getting a maximum incentive of \$500.

I think that this measure should be made compulsory if we want changes to be made around our country. I believe that if we want to change our climate dramatically, we need to look at the current economic system, which is elitist in relation to the exploitation of the environment, workers, women, and indigenous people. Capitalism is all about money, and within this economic system are capitalists. Within this system are the industrial capitalists who are ruining our planet, all for pure profit. These industrial capitalists are killing our forests, killing our animals, and really just killing our beautiful planet.

I just quickly add that up on the same level as these industrial capitalists is the Government. If the Government wants us to change, then the Government will have to change as well. State-owned enterprises are ravaging across our country, looking for new valleys to mine and new oil wells to drill. I commend the Government for looking into changing the ministerial fleet of cars, which has huge cars that are using a lot of oil and petrol and that sort of stuff. I do commend the Government for doing that. I am not saying that a National Government would be better, because they are all just as bad as each other. *[Interruption]* Before we could say zip, National members would be selling off the State-owned enterprises so that they could never be blamed for what the State-owned enterprises are doing. Of course, they would be adding to the gross profit that these industrial capitalists would make, which in turn, I believe, would make it worse. All Governments are similar on this issue, and this needs to change.

We of course need to play our part in our households and communities to reduce carbon emissions, like walking to work or using the public transport system—when we can put our trust into it once the Government improves it. Although we can change ourselves, we also need to change the current system that is exploiting and polluting our world. Industrial capitalism is changing the climate and polluting our only planet. *[Interruption]*

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): The member will be seated. I advise members that the Speaker will not allow a member who is speaking to be drowned out. This is a democracy. Everybody is entitled to have their say.

JAMES SLEEP: Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker. Within the system are the corporations draining the oil wells and mining the coalmines. All of these industries and corporations are changing the climate, and they need to be shut down. Thank you.

KATHERINE STEEL (List): Firstly, I am not a communist. Secondly, ladies and gentlemen, I give you the climate change Bible: *The Lorax*, by Dr Seuss. This is a book with a message. The message is that by harming the environment, we are harming the planet and ourselves. It is a message so simple that small children can understand it perfectly. We all seem to understand it, yet many supposedly intelligent adults just do not get it.

In its current form, the climate change bill before the Youth Parliament is trash. It is a pathetic token gesture at best, and an insult to our intelligence. Firstly, this sham does not target the worst polluters. Rich people driving sport utility vehicles will not switch to public transport for a measly \$500 a year. Those people whom the scheme would benefit most will simply not sign up to it. Secondly, the bill does not even look at making the carbon account scheme compulsory. Every New Zealander needs to be held accountable for his or her emissions. Thirdly, even if every New Zealander opened a carbon account and cut emissions by 10 percent, this would be a mere 1 percent of our total carbon emissions. It would not come close to meeting our Kyoto Protocol commitments.

Today's bill may send the message that ordinary Kiwis need to take responsibility for reducing their own emissions, but it will have virtually no effect on global warming. This bill is a farce. It stinks of bureaucracy and it is a waste of time and money that could be far more effectively spent. We must demand renewable energy, we must improve public transport, and we must enforce housing restrictions so that we have solar power. Most important, we must implement a carbon tax and rebate scheme that is mandatory.

Hon Member: Oh, State control.

KATHERINE STEEL: No, not quite. To halt climate change, we need a global carbon account of 90 percent by 2030. Time is running out, and still we do nothing by taking gutless, half-hearted measures such as this one. Everyone—politicians, businesses, and private citizens alike—must understand that climate change is the urgent problem that requires significant action right now. Practically everyone here today agrees that today's bill is a joke. The Youth Parliament is being manipulated to endorse a scheme that looks good but has no real impact. We have to take a stand.

Edward Brownlee: I raise a point of order, Mr Speaker. I understand that it is quite a serious allegation to make that this House at any time is being manipulated by any outside force. In order to protect the reputation of this House—both the Youth Parliament and the real Parliament—I think that statement should be withdrawn.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): Can I just say to members that if they look under Speakers' rulings 48/3 and 48/4, they refer to the words "dictated to", "received instructions", and "directions". So it is not the same.

KATHERINE STEEL: Do I have to apologise?

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): No—keep going.

KATHERINE STEEL: We will not be patronised. Abstain on the bill and tell the Government to stop fucking with our future. Thank you.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): If I heard it correctly, the member used a word that has never been used in this House before. If the member did so, it is absolutely out of order and unparliamentary. If the member did that, she will stand, withdraw, and apologise, and she will have 5 minutes outside the House.

KATHERINE STEEL: I withdraw and apologise.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): Thank you. The member will now leave the House.

Katherine Steel withdrew from the Chamber.

MARETA TAUTE (Te Tai Tonga): Tēnā koe, Mr Speaker. Ngā mihi matarahi ki te hunga e whai kanohi ana i tēnei taiwhanga. Ahu tōtika atu ki te kōkako o taku kōpako, arā, te kōrure o te āhuarangi, me pēhea te iwi e whakaiti i ngā kawenga o te kākāriki kōrohū o Aotearoa. E ai ki ngā tuhinga kōrero i rangahautia, kua whakatau kē, he tūkinō anō kua tau nei ki te taiao. Kua kitea te tūpono kei kore a Aotearoa e tutuki pai i ngā pironga kōrure o te āhuarangi i raro i te ture Kyoto. Ki tā te Tari o te Taiao, kua piki kē te here o te kawenga ki te 25 pai hēneti atu i te taumata i heretia i te tau 1991 i raro i te ture Kyoto. Ko te tikanga me whakaitia kē te kawenga ki te 25 pai hēneti, tae rawa ki te tau 2012. Ki te kore a Aotearoa e kaha ki te whakatika i ngā kawenga ki te taumata o te tau 1990, ka uru anō ia ki tōna ake hē. I tēnei wā tonu, ko te utu mō te whakautu rinaki a te iwi ki a Aotearoa, irā, ko te \$557 miriona taara. Ko te hua mō te pire nei, mā te kaupapa e tutuki ai ngā whakatau mō te ture Kyoto i waenganui i ngā tau 2008 me te 2012.

Hei whakakapi ake, me whakatau i ngā nekureihana ki te Kaunihera Whakahau i runga anō hoki i ngā kōrero a te Minita Whakaputa Moni hei here i te ture ki tōna whāriki. Nō reira, ka tika me whakawhāiti i ngā kawenga o te whare kākāriki korohū o

Aotearoa. I te kore, ko wai ka whai hua, ka tohu i te hē? Ko tātou anō! Tēnā koutou katoa.

[An interpretation in English was given to the House.]

[Greetings to you, Mr Speaker. Warm greetings to those of you my fellow youth MPs present in this Chamber. I shall go directly to the crux of my address: climatic changes and how people can reduce New Zealand's greenhouse gas emissions. According to researched information provided, there is definite evidence of environmental damage due to greenhouse gas emissions. New Zealand is at risk of failing to achieve its climatic change targets under the Kyoto Protocol. According to the Ministry for the Environment, New Zealand's greenhouse gas emissions are now 25 percent higher. Under the Kyoto Protocol, our emissions need to be reduced by 25 percent to the 1990 level by 2012. If New Zealand cannot restrict its net emissions to 1990 levels, it must otherwise take responsibility for its actions. At present, the project cost of the liability to New Zealand under the Kyoto Protocol will be approximately \$557 million. A positive outcome of this bill is that it will help New Zealand meet its Kyoto obligations for the period 2008 to 2012.]

In conclusion, regulations should be made by Order in Council on advice from the Minister of Revenue to meet New Zealand's obligations. We need to take action to help reduce New Zealand's greenhouse emissions. If we do not, who will benefit? Who will identify faults? It will be us again. Thank you all.]

JAMES TAWA (Christchurch East): New Zealand, Aotearoa—clean and green. We are admired as one of the most beautiful places in the world by many countries. But are we really clean and green? Are we all that we are cracked up to be? Like most members, I think not. Carbon dioxide emissions are constantly rising, as all members know. Emissions have increased by 25 percent since 1990, which is in my short lifetime. The initial New Zealand liability cost under the Kyoto Protocol is \$557 million, and New Zealand's international influence on environmental issues is at risk if it does not make credible efforts to reduce emissions. In our age group of 15 to 19-year-olds, if that \$557 million is broken down to an individual figure based on the percentage of the population in our age group, it would equate to each of us here and all others within our age demographic having to pay \$3,565 each.

It is time for us here to take responsibility by changing our attitudes towards excess emissions. If it took 17 years to increase emissions by 25 percent, then logically it should take at least another 32 years to drop emission levels down to what they were in 1990. Under the Kyoto Protocol our emissions need to be reduced by 25 percent, to the 1990 level, by 2012. To drop 17 years' worth of emissions in only 5 years will take a lot of hard work and attitude changes within families and communities. What are the things we can do to encourage attitude changes within communities? We can catch a bus, ride a bike, or walk. We can make our houses more energy efficient. We can educate our families on recycling and reusing resources. Carbon dioxide levels continue to rise, so we need to take ownership of the matter. We need to take responsibility and encourage reductions in unnecessary energy use.

New Zealand can still change its emissions levels. We can still be clean and green, and get our emission levels down. But first we must change our attitudes, and understand the seriousness of climate change. We want to be known as Aotearoa, Land of the Long White Cloud, not the "Land of the Wrong White Cloud". For that reason it is in my best interests that the Youth Parliament bill for 2007 on tackling climate change be accepted.

NOEMA TE HAU (Ikaroa-Rawhiti): I am going to make this short, sweet, simple, and, better yet, inspirational. Oh ye of little faith! I have a dream: that Māori people and

Pākehā people can live together in a world without the burden that is climate change. We know that average temperatures and rainfall will change dramatically, we know that sea levels will rise, and we know that we will have to contend with more frequent extreme weather conditions. But we also know that the human spirit is a strong one, and with this bill we can delay the terror of climate change. Let us set an example, and let our nation be the benchmark.

PENNY TIPU (Invercargill): In the not too distant future we will no longer see the snow on our beautiful mountains or be able to swim in our pristine lakes. Instead, these things that we New Zealanders are proud of and boast to the world about will be gone. We will bring on extreme flooding, drought, tsunamis, and landslides. We will say hello to global warming. This is, ironically, a heated issue. Today I will focus on why we urgently need to legislate for a carbon tax, financially and economically, and on what will undoubtedly be in store for us if this bill is not passed.

Climatic events such as the 1997 and 1998 floods were estimated to cost \$1 billion. The 2004 North Island floods cost New Zealand well over \$300 million. Both examples were a major blow to the economy. People lost their entire homes, their possessions, their businesses, and their jobs. Both events give an insight into what we shall experience in the future, at a more frequent rate. It is expected that by 2080 one-in-20-year droughts will be occurring at 3 to 5-yearly intervals. It will cost New Zealand millions of dollars down the track, and after each blow it will take years to rebuild. The result will be a receding economy and possibly a financial depression.

Agriculture in New Zealand is big business, with 52 percent of our exports coming from the agricultural sector. On the downside, 49 percent of our greenhouse gas emissions are also contributed from the agricultural sector. Putting a tax on cows for passing wind is not the answer. If the Government did that, there would be a decrease in the number of farmers and therefore our dairy and beef industries would be in ruins. Fewer farmers would be working, and jobs would be lost. Maybe if we changed land management practices and installed better methods to control greenhouse gas emissions, such as the use of fertilisers, developing crops for biofuels, increasing the amount of stored carbon in soil, and so on, we could combat those negative issues.

In addition to that, New Zealand must address a carbon tax in order to reduce our ecological footprint. As I am sure we are all aware by now, taxpayers will receive up to \$500 per annum for consuming less than the maximum amount of energy. This incentive is a great way for average Kiwis to do their part for our country in their own homes. The Kyoto Protocol, an international agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, states that between 2008 and 2012 New Zealand must cut the amount of greenhouse gases produced to 365 tonnes. That is a decrease of around 73 million tonnes a year. In 1999 New Zealand produced around 78 million tonnes. The statistics are absolutely shocking. New Zealand is rated 11th in the world for per capita greenhouse gas emissions. Simple things can be done to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as supporting the development of energy from renewable sources like wind and solar power, driving a fuel-efficient car, or even choosing a means of transport that minimises overall energy use. Under the carbon tax, people will be rewarded for taking the simplest of measures.

The National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research projects that global warming will undoubtedly have disastrous environmental effects throughout New Zealand. These include the sea level rising, meaning that some areas of coastal settlement will be under water. This could well be the future of my home town, Invercargill. In the east it will be drier and in the west it will be wetter. Winds are expected to increase in strength and frequency. There will be an increased risk of forest

fires, and droughts will happen in spring and autumn, not just in summer. Our native wildlife is under threat, as its habitat is slowly but surely diminishing.

Stronger actions must be taken. In order for New Zealand to meet its obligations under the Kyoto Protocol, we must look at realistic avenues like introducing a carbon tax. How else will our mokopuna be able to enjoy New Zealand and its beauty, as we can today? Thank you.

EDDIE TUIAVII (Te Atatu): Tēnā koe, Mr Speaker. Tihei mauri ora! He aha te mea nui? [*What is the most important thing?*] He tangata, he tangata, he tangata. It is people, it is people, it is people. This issue is about our children, our grandchildren, and our great-grandchildren, and about ensuring that a safe environment will be there for them to live in.

New Zealand has done much in the way of helping our neighbouring Pacific Islands and other countries globally, but it is time that we cleaned up our own backyard before looking over the fence and helping others. We must be made accountable for our own actions. Just because the big guns do not take responsibility, that does not mean we should pass the buck. We get fined for trashing, littering, or polluting our environment. More to the point, we are held accountable. If we add to the gas emissions, we should be made accountable.

I say come on, New Zealand, let us make this a better place for you and me. Let us make it sustainable. Being nuclear-free is one thing that we are damn proud of. We should not spoil 20 years of pride. Yes, some members may not agree with windmills or solar energy initiatives, but one thing is for sure: the climate is changing. I am sure we are now in agreement on that fact. I tell members not to be lazy and not to sit around. They should not whinge or moan.

This is a step in the right direction. The journey of a thousand miles begins with just one small step. We should be wise and cautious. I say to my fellow Youth Parliamentarians for 2007 that we may have diverse views, but one thing is certain, and whether or not members know this, it unites us: the climate is changing. Members should stop pointing the finger and look in the mirror. They should stop eating sweet, holey doughnuts, and stop playing with bulls' ears and blending dry carrots. Let us get real, and we will see the climate is changing. No reira, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, kia ora tātou katoa.

JAMES WALKINSHAW (New Plymouth): Sitting here in the seat of the Minister for Transport Safety, I would like to start with a story that I believe is quite relevant to this seat and to this debate. Last week, on Thursday night, I was driving home from Auckland to my home in New Plymouth. It was around 10 o'clock when I reached Te Kūiti. The moon was full, but it had just been covered with thick, black storm clouds. Flash! The sky was illuminated, bright and white, as though someone had turned on a bright light in a dim room. I was blinded, and nearly missed a corner. Little did I know that while I was heading full speed towards a ditch, 11 tornadoes were hitting the region simultaneously, in New Plymouth city, in the small coastal town of Ōākura, and even inland. Twisters in Taranaki? I would never have imagined I would see something as terrific as that in my life. School peers, neighbours, and friends of mine had their homes and properties destroyed.

Climate change is affecting us already. The thunderstorms in Taranaki seem to me to be the perfect example of climate change. Taranaki has never seen an event such as that in its recorded history. In just over a week there were over 500 lightning strikes in the Taranaki region alone. That is a huge amount of power, and that is a huge amount of electricity. The result was a huge amount of destruction. However, the energy in those thunderstorms is nothing compared with that used by New Zealand households every year.

The uncle of a friend of mine, Mr Paul Waide, from the International Energy Agency in Paris, recently analysed New Zealand's energy industry and found that not only does New Zealand have sufficient energy to provide for all its citizens but also New Zealand is one of the most energy inefficient and energy wasteful countries in the world. That organisation found that, globally, lighting consumes more electricity than that produced by hydro or, for those with the inclination, by nuclear power. He went on to say that the carbon dioxide emissions resulting from lighting alone are equal to two-thirds of the emissions caused by the world's cars.

I believe this bill can be used as an effective framework to begin to reduce our country's carbon footprint. Members will see on page 4 of the climate change bill that it is proposed that credits be provided to technologies that reduce consumption, increase efficiency, and use more sustainable sources. Paul Waide went on to say that if all lighting was replaced with energy-efficient models such as eco-bulbs, there would be a 40 percent reduction in lighting consumption worldwide. That may not seem like much, but the result on carbon dioxide emissions would be like taking one-quarter of the world's cars off the road. Suddenly, I could see clearly. The lightning strike that had nearly sent me off the road seems to me to be a perfect metaphor for where we are going. If we refuse to clear our vision, we will drive blindly into that ditch. Stopping climate change is a long road, but the first step is not very hard. It is as easy as changing a light bulb. Now, the question is: how many politicians does it take to change a light bulb?

ELISHA WATSON (Wellington Central): I think it is pretty safe to assume that we all love the environment here. That is the reason why we ratified the Kyoto Protocol in 1990. But the way that this bill proposes to meet Kyoto targets is simply ludicrous. Today I am not going to stand up here and say "Let's save the children.", "The children are the future.", or any of those kinds of things. No, I am going to talk to you about lovely money and how we can honour the Kyoto agreement.

Basically, we have two options. Option A is to bite the bullet and pay \$557 million because we have not met our Kyoto goal, which is to be 5 percent under our 1990 emission levels. That money would essentially go towards helping the environment elsewhere. It is all very nice money, and that is just great. But option B is to pay \$250 million each year in order for 80 percent of households to—maybe—cut 10 percent from under 50 percent of our total emissions in New Zealand. That is a lot of numbers; I realise that. So in its simplest form, we would be paying \$1.4 billion, until 2012, for a total of about a 3 to 4 percent cut in our total emissions. In order to reach our Kyoto goals, we would need a 25 percent cut on top of that.

This bill is ludicrous, because those numbers just do not support the amount of money we would be putting into it. There is a huge disparity between \$1.4 billion and \$557 million. What other things could that money go towards? We have health issues in New Zealand; we could build more roads in Auckland—anything we like. We could even buy ourselves a few climate change scientists. It sounds like a win-win situation to me.

Another strike against this quite simply ridiculous bill is the complexity. I mean, our tax system ain't that great, so do we really want another tax credit - based thing on top of that, and would people really take it up? When we are considering legislation, we need to ask whether it will work. Sure, the morals may be there—the ideals; taking a step forward for mankind—but at the end of the day, will it work? Are we just trying to pass something that maybe a few people will join up to but that will not make very much difference? If that is the case, we need to come back to the drawing board and think about whether there is a better way to do this.

Is there another way? Yes, there is. Is this the only way? No! There are many different things we could do that simply do not come at such a high cost to New Zealanders—\$1.4 billion till 2012, I tell members; \$1.4 billion. Is that worth it, for a 3 to 4 percent cut in our total emissions?

This bill is not about tree-huggers versus non - tree-huggers; this bill is about practicality versus impracticality. Which one will members go for? Thank you.

OLIVIA WEST (List): Firstly, on behalf of the respectful youth MPs in this Chamber, I wish to express my embarrassment and outrage at the language used in the House that unfairly affected the reputation of New Zealand's youth.

I am not a scientist of any right, but I do know it is undeniable that climate change is happening around us. Global warming is having an effect on our planet now; we need to take action. I am here to deliver to members speech No. 50 of 53 speeches, and by now we have heard it all. We have heard many different views and arguments today on climate change, on how to address the issue, and on possible solutions to reduce its effects currently and in the future.

We have had brought to our attention, by the Green Party representatives, the irresponsible response to this bill. To abstain on the bill shows an on-the-fence opinion, and portrays to the public a weak reaction. That does not get us anywhere, but only delays future work in the reduction of carbon emissions and enforces the negative mentality that nothing can be done, when something can. Whether we leave and head to Mars, as yesterday our esteemed colleague Pita Sharples kindly alluded to—with the idea that some of our fellow members originated from there—will be left in the hands of someone with a little more of an educated view of life on other planets. What we need to address is the here and now, and what we do as young people with time ahead of us, and with the voice to take responsibility and effect change, as there is only more that can be done.

This bill, the “Household Response to Climate Change Bill”, is a conscious step in taking responsibility as a nation to reduce carbon emissions. I do not agree that this bill is enough, and I do not agree that it is the be-all and end-all, but I do agree that it is an unselfish, positive beginning. No one takes or accepts extreme change openly, and our nation as a whole will not take to the implementation of nuclear power like a duck taking to water. Our nuclear-free stance is a strong and respected one—one we wish to keep. I ask members this question: how do we eat an elephant? They know the answer: bit by bit. The household climate change bill is a small but conscious step in the right direction.

KATE WILLYAMS (Otago): Global warming—there is a problem, so we need to fix it now and reduce our ecological footprint. All we really need to do is just to wear smaller shoes. “Smaller shoes” means decreasing our use of fossil fuels and going for the smaller things first, such as energy-efficient technology, good insulation in houses, recycling, walking and biking more, and taking out open fires. As in the example of David and Goliath, where the small guy beat the big guy, we can help to prevent climate change by everyone doing the small things. Together, that can be big. There is no need to go nuclear, as we already have right in front of us the resources for change—resources such as wind and sun. If we use them effectively, we can make a difference. That is where this current Government has been good. It has not just sat and talked about it, but has gone ahead and tried to make a change.

Yes, we all know this proposal is not perfect, but who or what is? This bill is a stepping stone on to greater things. This proposal is for change, and that, at this moment, is what our country needs in order to help with the effects of global warming. That is why I am going to vote for this proposal—because it is not for nuclear power or for something that will ruin our environment but is an attempt at a solution.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): I call the honourable member Seamus Woods.

SEAMUS WOODS (List): That was an admirable try, Mr Assistant Speaker; it is Seamus.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): Thank you, Seamus. My apologies, Seamus.

SEAMUS WOODS: I thank the member Olivia West for her speech and now, as speaker No. 52, what the “Katherine Steel” do I say?

As we are all well aware from the oodles of literature provided for us, the evidence that climate change is here and needs to be countered now is incontrovertible. We, as young people, will inherit the environment in the future—and yes, I am going to go there—as will our children and our children’s children from us. If we want their environment to be one that does not closely resemble a dog-eat-dog science fiction horror film, we need to act now. It is important that we capitalise on the opportunity we have been given, as the representatives of youth in this country, to send a clear message to the current leaders of the country that in our current legislation measures need to be put in place to show that young people, too, care about climate change as a very real issue and one that needs addressing. On those grounds, I believe it would be a sensible move for us to support this bill.

However, in terms of the practicality and actual content of this bill, I am not entirely convinced that the bill is the appropriate vehicle to move forward with. I came into this debate open to persuasion on whether to vote for it, and I thank the 51 members who have spoken previously for helping me to come closer to a decision about whether to vote for it. I believe it is important that we send a number of other messages to the Government and to the leaders of the country that other factors need to be looked at. That includes—as was mentioned in some of the background literature we were given—the need for other sectors, like industry and the Government—and agriculture, of course—to reduce their emissions, if the country’s emissions as a whole are to be decreased. Also, motor vehicle emissions need to be looked at in more depth. Living where I live in Pukerua Bay, wedged between State Highway 1 and the North Island Main Trunk Railway, I see hundreds of trucks go past for every single goods train. I think incentives need to be put in place in this area to force freight off the roads and on to the railway tracks. Trains can carry freight far more efficiently than trucks can.

It is important that we recognise the truth behind the phrase “sustainable energy”, which is bandied about this House, both in Youth Parliament and in adult Parliament. This country does need to look at sustainable energy, although I like to think we are a far cry from having to look at nuclear power as it currently stands—thank you, anyway, to Sam Hannagan and the “uranium kid”.

There are flaws in this bill. Yes, it seems a lot of effort in return for what would probably be little gain. But, in all fairness, every little bit counts. So this bill is one way forward, but it is certainly not the only way forward. Thank you.

VINCENT WYLIE (List): It is one thing to be the 52nd member to speak, but it is quite something else to be the 53rd and last member to speak—and there is no pressure on me as the last guy up here. I start by saying that I wrote my speech on Sunday. The speech I wrote on Sunday was definitely not the speech I ended up writing on Monday night, and that was not the speech I ended up writing last night. Since I came into Parliament grounds and into the Chamber today, I have probably rewritten it another three or four times. As I have been sitting here listening to all you folk—[*Interruption*] I am getting there; members should not worry. Since I have been sitting here listening to members, I have been thinking through a few things.

I start by just pointing out that if any of us dropped a piece of rubbish on the ground, most of us, I assume, would pick it up. It is what we do, and it is seen as the good thing to do. So in turn, if we were to emit greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, surely we would want to clean that up too. It is not really seen as any different. It is littering in one way, and we want to keep the environment as clean as possible. I am sure that on the whole we would agree with that. We all emit greenhouse gases into the atmosphere in various ways, be it through power consumption or driving a car, and perhaps some members' parents are farmers. The more greenhouse gases we emit, the warmer our planet gets.

There are many people in this House, as there are around the country, who believe that climate change is an issue and that we need to do something about it. I am one of them. There are also many members in the House who probably do not think climate change is an issue at all. They think it is not as serious as it seems. I accept that argument, but that is not what I am talking about today.

I have issues with the bill before the House today. I am concerned about how a smart card or an eco-card would be administered. I am concerned that people will not want to take it up, and I am concerned that it will be very impractical and very messy. I am concerned that ordinary Kiwis will not be able to afford to change to these technologies, even with Government help. I am concerned that giving people \$500 will not give them enough of an incentive, that the whole thing will be a hindrance to people, and that the uptake will not be high enough. I am concerned that people will want to participate but will not be able to pay—they cannot afford what they cannot afford. I am also conscious of what 1,000 people have said today, so to speak.

This bill is a step. I am not satisfied with the step. I do not think it is a big enough step. I think we need to take more of a step. We need to look at things like industries and at how business people are emitting greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, and we need to help with that as well. I think that needs to be addressed, and ideally I would like to see amendments made to this bill. That is something I would definitely like to see today. But change is better than no change. Am I satisfied with the bill? No. Would I be satisfied with nothing happening at all? Absolutely not. Would I rather have a bill like this than nothing at all? Yes, I would. So I will be supporting the bill.

I think we also need to look at other things like wind energy. I do not know whether it is just me, but I reckon wind turbines look really cool—that is probably just me. I thought the Auckland waterfront stadium for the 2011 Rugby World Cup looked really awesome as well, and was not an eyesore. But that is just me. No, we should not have wind turbines in Central Otago's pristine atmosphere, and no, we should not line them around Lake Taupō and those sorts of places—obviously. It is common sense. But I come from Wellington, and Mākara is a nice place. I play golf there sometimes. It is not the best course. But if we put wind turbines on Mākara hill, will that really be bad? No, I reckon they look cool, and they are a symbol. They symbolise us making an effort and taking a step forward. We need to take more of those steps forward. It will be nice to walk around and see those symbols and say that yes, we are making that difference.

So I think the bill needs a hell of a lot of work, and I would like to see amendments made to it, but, more important, I want something to happen.

A personal vote was called for on the question, *That the Household Response to Climate Change Bill be now read a second time.*

Ayes 53

Aiolupotea	Gray	Naidoo	Taute
Ashby	Green	Neary	Tawa
Breese	Grogan	O'Sullivan	Te Hau
Brinsley-Pirie	Gulland	Pollard	Tipu
Brown A	Hall	Primrose	Tombleson
Brown J	Jones E	Puriri	Tuiavii
Burson	Kennedy	Rayner	Walkinshaw
Campbell-Seymour	Kilkolly	Robinson	Walters
Chase	Lee C	Rowe	West
Coatsworth	Legge	Samuelu	Willyams
Devathanan	Lesa	Sifakula	Wylie
Dunning	Mattheews	Smith J	
Foley	McIntosh	Suo	
Gainsford	Mockford	Tacoma	

Noes 53

Barnett	English	Manson	Te Tai
Belton-Brown	Gin	McDonald	Templeton
Brown S	Gow	Meikle	Veale
Brownlee E	Grover	Mitchell	Wallis
Cant	Hannagan	Morgan	Watson
Carroll	Hunter	Mott	Wiley
Child	Im	Neild	Wood
Clark	Jackson	Panoho	Woods
Cook	Kalderimis	Ritchie	
Cox	Kalekale	Robertson	
Craven	Kapi	Robotham	
Crawford	Larsen	Sansbury	
Delany	Lee A	Sirajur	
		Raheem	
Dunn N	Lee Y	Slight	
Emery	Luoni	Smith K	

Abstentions 14

Abraham	Dunn J	Kingi	Steel
Anderson	Edginton	Morris	Triandafilidis
Crossman	Hillock	Satija	
Donald	Johnson	Sleep	

Motion not agreed to.

MOTIONS

Youth Parliament

ASHLEIGH KAPI (List): I move, *That this and the next Youth Parliament continue to emphasise the importance of young people understanding and participating in decision-making processes, and that each of us return to our communities with a commitment to being active citizens and encouraging others to do likewise.*

Motion agreed to.

Expression of Appreciation to Staff

ROBERT ANDERSON (Rimutaka): I move, *That this House note thanks to all of the people that have worked to make Youth Parliament 2007 a success, including staff from Bellamy's, the Office of the Clerk, the Parliamentary Service, the Office of the Speaker, and the Ministry of Youth Development.*

Motion agreed to.

Expression of Appreciation to MPs

GARETH VEALE (Waimakariri): I move, *That this House note thanks to all of the members of Parliament that have made themselves available throughout this session and hope they have gained some insights into the hopes, dreams, and aspirations of young New Zealanders.*

Motion agreed to.

Youth Parliament 2007—Vote of Thanks

JADE GRAY (List): I seek leave to thank Madam Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, and the Assistant Speakers for making themselves available to preside over Youth Parliament 2007.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (H V Ross Robertson): Is there any objection to that course of action being taken? There appears to be none.

JADE GRAY: Thank you very much Madam Speaker, Mr Deputy Speaker, and Assistant Speakers.

The House adjourned at 3.40 p.m.

