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Coalition Fractures Deepen Over Future of Net Zero Pledge

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Internal divisions are widening within the Coalition as the debate over Australia’s climate targets intensifies, casting serious doubt over the opposition’s future commitment to the net zero by 2050 emissions reduction target. The once broadly accepted policy is now under growing scrutiny, with key voices within the Liberal and Nationals parties calling for a rethink amid mounting concern over the economic cost and political consequences.

Former Deputy Prime Minister and Nationals leader Barnaby Joyce reignited the discussion by introducing a private member's bill aimed at repealing the net zero by 2050 target. While the bill has no chance of passing due to the current government's majority in the House of Representatives, it underscores deep dissatisfaction within the Coalition's ranks about the direction of its climate policy. Joyce argues that the policy has become an economic liability for regional Australia, which he says is unfairly bearing the burden of emissions reductions while city-based voters remain disconnected from the costs.



Opposition Leader Sussan Ley has not yet committed to a firm stance, saying the Coalition will hold off on formal policy decisions until after an internal review of its poor showing in the last federal election. However, this strategic pause has done little to silence the calls from within the party for a more pragmatic and economically grounded approach to climate policy. Some Liberal MPs are now openly questioning whether the net zero goal aligns with Australia's energy and industrial needs, particularly in the absence of viable alternatives that can maintain energy security and affordability.

This internal debate comes at a time when Australians are feeling the pinch of rising energy prices and increasing cost of living pressures. While climate goals remain important, voters are growing weary of policies that appear symbolic but lack practical pathways. The Coalition now faces a crucial opportunity to reset its approach one that acknowledges global climate concerns but prioritizes national economic resilience and jobs. If it is to present itself as a credible alternative to Labor, the Coalition must focus less on ideological purity and more on

policies that reflect the realities of everyday Australians. The road to government may well depend on getting that balance right.

