

Coal Policy Committee Engagement Report Must Be Released Immediately

December 29, 2021

Today the Coal Policy Committee submitted its two reports on the future of coal mining in Alberta to Energy Minister Sonya Savage. The Minister responded by saying the Kenney government “will take the necessary time to review the reports’ findings and recommendations carefully before they are released publicly.”

AWA welcomes the Coal Committee’s submissions. We are very disappointed, however, in Minister Savage’s response. There is no democratic reason for not releasing the engagement report immediately. This is the report where the Committee details what it heard from 67 engagement sessions, more than 170 detailed written submissions, and more than 1,000 email submissions.

The government’s desire to study the Committee’s policy recommendations before responding to the final report justifies some delay in publicly releasing the Committee’s final report and recommendations. But, this logic doesn’t apply to letting Albertans know what the Committee heard. “Albertans deserve to hear today, not at some unspecified future date, what the Coal Policy Committee heard from Albertans,” said Ian Urquhart, AWA’s Executive Director.

As for responding to the Committee’s policy recommendations, Minister Savage should set a specific, explicit deadline for her government’s response to the Committee’s work. “The Minister must not repeat the experience of the Allan Inquiry into Anti-Alberta Energy Campaigns,” said Urquhart, “where the Kenney government took 12 weeks to release the Inquiry’s report and respond to its findings.”

“The thousands of Albertans who have spoken out knowledgeably and passionately about the future of coal in Alberta regard the future of coal as a very high priority,” Urquhart added. “Premier Kenney should respect these citizens and release the Committee’s final report by the middle of January at the latest.”

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