

Why Friends of the Earth opposes the Trade Union Bill

Friends of the Earth (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) is part of Friends of the Earth International, the world's largest grassroots environmental network – with 75 national member groups and 5,000 local activist groups on every continent, including in some of the poorest countries on Earth.

Friends of the Earth campaigns for a just world where people and nature thrive. We are an environmental justice organisation with a vision of an economy that is fair, green and democratic.

A core tenet of this economy is upholding and cherishing the right to peacefully protest. Yet the Trade Union Bill, which includes restrictions on the rights of unions to protest and overly onerous requirements to report planned protest 14 days in advance, will have a chilling effect on the desire to protest and a practical impact on the ability to.

It must be seen in the light of a steady assault on civil liberties, including the pernicious Transparency of Lobbying Act 2014 which undermines the right of organisations including campaign groups, charities and trade unions to campaign peacefully, to organise, and to have their voices heard ahead of elections – and the move to force demonstrators to pay to protest.

We also believe the national workforce has a critical role to play in helping to deliver the major transition to a green UK that we so urgently need. Every job will ultimately have to become a green job.

However the Trade Union Bill **enables the Government to cap how much time and resource union representatives can spend representing their members in the workplace. This risks curtailment of the many hundreds of 'green workplace' initiatives nationwide** in which union representatives, reacting to the demands of their members for greener, more sustainable working environments, [often play a galvanising role](#).

The only viable future for the UK economy is one built around low-carbon, resource-efficient industries and businesses. Tackling climate change and building genuinely sustainable businesses are imperatives for the 21st century. **We need a strong, active, green and galvanised union movement more than ever.** In the words of Sharan Borrows, General Secretary of the International Trade Union Congress, "there are no jobs on a dead planet".

For more than 40 years we've seen that the wellbeing of people and planet go hand in hand – and it's been the inspiration for our campaigns. Together with thousands of people like you we've secured safer food and water, defended wildlife and natural habitats, championed the move to clean energy and acted to keep our climate stable. Be a Friend of the Earth – see things differently.