

AI Revolution

My name is Stuart Smith, and I'm the Member of Parliament for Kaikoura, which is in the top of the South Island of New Zealand.

Legislators possess the capacity to effect meaningful change. We can cultivate an environment conducive to peace and security through strengthening regional stability, promoting awareness of international commitments, meticulously examining proposed laws, and denouncing breaches of global statutes.

New Zealand occupies a unique position as a prominent regional influencer in the Pacific, with a robust democratic system. Our commitment to constructing pathways to peace is deeply woven into our national identity.

Science and technology are the enablers of better lives, reducing mundane tasks that our ancestors had to undertake just to survive.

Artificial intelligence or AI is reshaping our world, and Parliamentarians need to make the most of this opportunity and ensure it is used for the benefit of all citizens. How well we do this will determine our future.

As noted in the recent UK Growth Study, demand for electricity will continue to rise as households switch to electric vehicles and heat pumps, along with the growth in energy hungry AI data centres.

To meet that need requires more reliable and affordable electricity generation.

In New Zealand, we are blessed with renewable energy sources including hydro, geothermal, wind and solar power generating up to 85% of our electricity.

Our vibrant, market-driven electricity sector is free from government subsidies.

As the market builds more wind and solar generation capacity, it drives the need for an additional, reliable back up system for when the wind isn't blowing, or the sun isn't shining. Natural gas will fill this role and enable New Zealand to be a part of the AI revolution.

To meet this challenge, requires reforms to planning laws, to enable the growth in energy infrastructure to realise the economic growth and development opportunity.

The energy security of countries is now intrinsically linked to economic performance, technological advancements, security and social development.

Legislators can and should, drive this meaningful change.

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