

Mandelson loses fight with Miliband over CO₂ disclosure law

By Jesse Loncraine

Business Secretary Lord Mandelson has clashed with Ed Miliband, the Climate Change Secretary, over proposed legislation that will force big companies to detail all their carbon dioxide emissions.

In his first dispute with a leading Brownite since returning to the Cabinet, Lord Mandelson failed to scup-

per an amendment to the Climate Change Bill that will see companies forced to report how much they pollute, but he did manage to get its implementation delayed by two years to 2012.

Lord Mandelson tried to stop the new law because he was concerned that the bureaucracy involved would be too burdensome.

The disclosure proposal was tabled by the Government last week.

"Mandelson objected to the amendment. There was a long wrangle that lasted a week or two but Miliband won the fight on points," said a Whitehall source.

Greg Clark, the shadow Climate Change Secretary, pointed out that the amendment was introduced less than a week before a Commons vote on the Bill on Tuesday. "It is extraordinary the amendments were only

tabled on Thursday. There has clearly been an internal row," he said.

The Conservatives broadly support the Bill, but Alan Duncan, the shadow Business Secretary, has referred to carbon reporting as "heavy-handed bureaucracy."

The amendment was introduced by a coalition of backbench Labour MPs supported by leading pressure groups, including Christian Aid and

public affairs agency Aldersgate.

Jon Cruddas, the former deputy Labour leadership candidate who has backed the amendment, said: "If the City is going to survive as a leading financial centre then it's going to have to change the way it does business. We need to stop companies fiddling the books, whether that's simply on their finances or on workforce, social and environmental measures."