

Submission to the Unconventional Gas Parliamentary Inquiry

To the Environment and Planning Committee,

I am writing to you to express my concerns about the unconventional gas industry and how it may affect my family and business.

As an agricultural and tourism business, I rely heavily on the high standards I have set for my produce and services.

I have many concerns about the unconventional gas industry, especially if it was allowed in my area. Below are a few key points I wish to make.

1. How would the industry affect my environment? I rely on producing the highest quality of produce within a pristine and clean environment. Gas emissions, chemicals used in the injection, waste water contamination, and industrialisation of the area. All these will affect my environment and my business. The region's rich soil provides the basis for thriving horticulture, viticulture, dairy production, timber plantation/harvesting, cattle grazing and wool production.
2. Tourism is a key part of our business, and the gas industry does not entice visitors from afar. The heavy truck and construction traffic on our roads will deter visitors, plus the eye sore this industry leaves. The world famous Great Ocean Road attracts thousands of tourists throughout the year. What a shame to allow a gas company to taint such a beautiful area. *The total tourism contribution to the Great Ocean Road alone is \$1,832 million 20,000 jobs, 11.1% of Gross Regional Product and 11.6% employment share. (SOURCE: Victorian Regional Satellite Accounts 2011-12 produced by Deloitte Access Economics.)*

*In 2013 the Surf Coast Shire attracted a total of 1,677,833 visitors spending \$410,631,653. This comprised of: 902,000 domestic day visitors spending \$92,906,000
750,000 domestic overnight visitors spending \$303,750,000
25,833 international visitors spending \$13,975,653. SOURCE: National Visitor Survey YE December 2013 Tourism Research Australia and REMPLAN analysis*
3. Property values, we have invested time and resources into establishing an economic viable business. Property values would certainly decrease. Our land is valued accordingly as it is the best fertile soil in Victoria. A drop in property values would stifle future investments in our business by reducing our borrowing capacity.
4. Will my business be covered by insurance if contamination, leaks or accidents occurring on my property?
5. The fact I have no powers to stop gas companies from accessing my land (after taking me to VCAT to sign a compensation agreement), is simply terrifying.

The Daniel Andrews Labor government has invested big dollars in Agriculture, promising, a \$200 million *Future Industries Fund*, awarding \$1 million grants to businesses specialising in the food and fibre sector, and in five other high-growth industries in which Victoria is poised to lead the world. Invest \$20 million in *Food Source Victoria*, a new program to build alliances of producers – hailing from the same region and home to the same specialty. The regional alliances will focus on high-quality goods and collectively market their produce for export. Ref- *Back on the Land 2015*

Why would we risk our productive agricultural industry, which has injected 11 billion dollars into the Victorian economy. The gas and agriculture cannot co-exist. There are too many risks, unknown knowledge gaps, and slack regulations, which give me no confidence. The risks are just too great to say they can be managed with regulation.

I have only touched on a few issues, but let me assure you, this industry is not welcome on my land, in my community and in Victoria.

Kind regards,