



July 10th 2015

Mr Keir Delaney,
Secretary,
Environment & Planning Committee,
Parliament House,
Spring St,
MELBOURNE 3002

Submission to Inquiry into Onshore Unconventional Gas in Victoria

Dear Mr Delaney,

I write to inform your committee that I am strongly opposed to any form of unconventional gas mining – including coal seam gas, tight gas and shale gas – in my home community and beyond. I live on a family farm at Darriman, a district adjacent to the Ninety Mile Beach and Mullungdung State Forest between Seaspray and Woodside in Gippsland. A survey undertaken in my community found that 98% of residents are against the industry. Surely this shows that the mining companies, and indeed the government, have no social licence to establish such an industry here.

In response to the Terms of Reference of your Parliamentary Inquiry into Unconventional Gas Mining, follows some of the reasons why I strongly oppose the establishment of this industry anywhere in Victoria:

1. The well documented risks to our precious underground water aquifers, upon which all food and fibre production is completely reliant.
2. The health risks from soil and drinking water contamination secondary to dangerous chemicals used in the fracking process.
3. The threat of environmental damage to our nearby Gippsland Lakes system should any contaminated mining waste water held in settling ponds escape.
4. The construction and operation of drilling pads, all-weather roads and continuous traffic across farming land 24 hours a day and seven days a week would make running a farming business almost impossible.
5. Fugitive gas emissions and constant flaring would be a huge fire risk particularly during summer and drier months.

Who would choose to live in such an environment? Agriculture and an unconventional Gas Industry cannot co-exist safely. What government in its right mind would risk the health and prosperity of such a productive area of Gippsland? The sustainability of beef, sheep, dairying and vegetable growing industries, as well as tourism, is so closely connected to the wellbeing of the Ramsar-listed Gippsland Lakes, and directly threatened by the possible operation of an onshore gas industry.

Yours sincerely

