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Greenfields Equestrian and Fencing Pty Ltd



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.

First of all let me make it clear that I don't want this industry in my community or any other Victorians, I SAY NO TO THIS INDUSTRY IN ANY FORM. Coal seam, tight gas, shale gas and underground coal gasification.

The Gas industry can't guarantee that there will be no leaks of gas into the atmosphere or any of the below ground substructures, water tables, or even the water aquifers that the Geelong water supply comes from. If this was to accrue in any way it not only would be a disaster for all living creatures on top of the ground it would also have as just a quall effect under the ground which in turn will effect every thing on top of the ground. You would be putting every body who lives and works in the area at unacceptable health risks. You only need to go and have a look at the experience that people are dealing with in NSW and QLD to realise this is a very bad thing.

I personally have surveyed my whole community on this issue of the unconventional gas industry. We have surveyed over 600 residents and covered over 1100 square km's of prime farming land and there is an over whelming NO vote for this industry. There is a 97% of people in our community have said NO, they don't want any gas industry, for the reasons that I have mentioned and many more of there own. So I would sit up and take notice of this when 97% of the voting public are saying NO to what you are proposing.

As an agricultural business, I rely heavily on the high standards I have set for my produce that I grow.

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.

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, fat lambs, all types of grains and wool production amongst many other agricultural pursuits.

Are you going to guarantee that my produce will not be affected by this industry now and into the future and my kids, kids generations. I invest heavily into the soil that produces the products that you enjoy to eat on your dinner table every day. Are you prepared to put this all at risk.

Tourism is a key part of the region, and this industry does 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 region 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

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.

Will my business be covered by insurance if contamination, leaks or accidents occur on my property?

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.

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

Regards Ian Clarke