

To the Environment and Planning Committee,

Victoria, and all of Australia (and the world) has to move away from using fossil fuels to make energy. We know that using fossil fuels has led to climate change, and we have to stop using fossil fuels. We do not need an unconventional gas industry in Victoria to supply energy. Unconventional gas is not a renewable source of energy - it is polluting, contributes to climate change, and is not required as a fuel to transition between fossil fuels and renewables. We can make a planned transition to 100% renewables in Victoria without the need for gas as a 'bridging' fuel, but we need to start investing in real renewables like solar and wind power now.

We don't need an unconventional gas industry in Victoria to provide employment. Supporting and growing our renewables industry will provide more jobs that are future-proofed and lead to greater long-term employment growth in Victoria. Growth in our renewables industry provides a valuable opportunity for re-skilling and redeploying workers who need help to transition from traditional energy production roles – there are now more people employed installing solar panels in Victoria than in coal generation.

Other places, including New York City and Ohio have already instituted permanent bans on coal seam gas, and Victoria should follow suit, as this is what the community wants.

Coal seam gas carries massive and proven risks for the environment and health. It threatens our environment, land productivity, agricultural industries, our water supply, our communities and public health, and the risks are far too great to be mitigated or outweighed by any benefits.

Victorian communities do not want unconventional gas. At least 30 communities have already declared themselves gasfield-free, and the number continues to grow. The Government needs to respect the wishes of Victorian communities. Please do not allow any more fossil fuel use in Victoria.

**David Feith**

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