

To the Environment and Planning Committee,

After considerable research into the history and risk potential of the unconventional gas industry, I urge you put a complete ban on the industry and prevent any activity in Victoria.

- Victorian communities don't 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. In a recent survey through my 300 face book friends (via survey monkey) I asked a simple question: "Do you want Victoria to remain gasfield free?" Of the 106 that took the survey exactly 100 responded to this question. 91.84% said YES they do want Victoria to remain Gasfield free. 7.14% said No and 1.02% said they were not sure. My own birth town of Digby (3309) had an overwhelming 96% refusing to allow the industry to gain a foothold and all across Victoria the consensus is becoming clearer with every survey completed. **RURAL VICTORIANS DO NOT WANT THE UNCONVENTIONAL GAS INDUSTRY.**

- We don't 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 jurisdictions like 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.

Helen Henry

