

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 8 July 2015 10:13 AM
To: EPC
Subject: Submission to the Environment & Planning Committee Inquiry into Unconventional Gas in Victoria

To the Environment and Planning Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Box Hill Baptist Church to voice our very strong concern about coal seam gas extraction. We are very concerned about the potentially extremely long term detrimental consequences with only short term gains, not to mention the increase in green house gases.

As a community we strongly advocate for the support of energy industries into wind and solar.

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.

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.

Thank you for your kind attention to our very serious concerns for the future health and well being of all Victorians.

Rev Dr Richard Mallaby
Minister
Box Hill Baptist Church

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]