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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 30 June 2015 12:20 PM  
**To:** EPC  
**Subject:** Submission to the Environment & Planning Committee Inquiry into Unconventional Gas in Victoria

To the Environment and Planning Committee,

As someone who has been following the effects of fracking on farmers and regional communities in Australia and abroad, I would hate to see the unconventional gas industry unleashed on Victoria. American films such as "Gaslands" reveal the unacknowledged toll fracking takes on health, environments and livelihoods. Research being done by the Lock the Gate Alliance shows that the same damage is already occurring in regions of Australia where fracking takes place. The risks are far too great to be mitigated or outweighed by any benefits. We know that locals suffer when coal seam gas arrives, so to allow this industry to go ahead anyway is to put the interests of big business ahead of the welfare of Victorian voters and farmers. These people, not gas, are the real life blood of our state and their property and livelihoods deserve to be protected.

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. 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.

Furthermore, 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.

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.

**Sarah Dowling**

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