



06 July 2015

The Hon David Davis,
Chairman,
Environment and Planning Committee
via email: epc@parliament.vic.gov.au

Dear Mister Chairman

**Inquiry into the Planning and Environment Amendment (Recognising Objectors)
Bill 2015**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above mentioned Amendment Bill.

Introducing a provision that will impel a Responsible Authority and the Victorian Administrative and Appeals Tribunal to have regard to 'the number of objectors to permit applications in considering whether a proposed use or development may have a significant social effect' is based on the seriously flawed concept that quantity bears a direct relationship to impact of a proposal.

The MCA regularly observes a multitude of rote or template submissions made to legislative reviews, inquiries and discussion papers. These can number in the hundreds, if not thousands, and are typically drafted by an activist organisation seeking to drum up support for their particular view.


It is imperative that when developing policy and legislation, and making determinations, the discussion should be based on merit, not simply a pseudo 'vote' for or against. Furthermore, focusing on objector's concerns regarding 'social effects', prioritises only one pillar of triple bottom line sustainable development - economic, social and environmental values.

MCA has long argued that the term 'objector' discourages 'supporters' of a particular proposal (and in turn no opportunity for a decision to have regard to these supporters) and incorrectly assumes that all projects are inherently negative.

The MCA does not support the Amendment Bill.

I look forward to discussing our concerns at your earliest convenience.

Yours Sincerely



**MEGAN DAVISON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**