

Committee Secretariat, Senate Standing Committee on Economics

Dear Secretariat,

The process for the National Radioactive Waste Facility to be built in South Australia has been very transparent, with many and varied guest speakers giving information on all aspects of the facility to everyone in the Kimba District and surrounds on how the low level waste will be transported and stored. We were all so privileged to listen to the three members that came from France to enlighten us on how they store and live with the radioactive waste facilities in their country. They have yet to find any evidence that their facility has any negative impact on agriculture production or the perception of a region near the facility.

I was also fortunate enough to visit Lucas Heights recently, and had an informative tour of the grounds and buildings. We visited the low and intermediate level waste storage areas and had it explained as to how the waste is stored now and how it will be processed and prepared for future storage in a new above ground low-level National Radioactive Waste Facility.

The tour of the reactor and ANSTO's medicine manufacturing was so interesting and informative, something that a lot of people and communities will benefit by in the future, Australia-wide. From my point of view, the 100 hectares that are needed for the national facility to store low-level waste and temporary storage of intermediate-level waste would be welcome to be undertaken in the Kimba area. More importantly though, I don't think there can be any reasonable suggestion that our community has not been fairly treated, well-informed, and engaged in a really positive way through this process.

I am a member of the Kimba Consultative Committee, and I have lived in the Kimba district all my life. I have been a farmer, business owner, raised a family and have family still living in the area. I am very interested in the long-term, sustainable future of our community. Our population has been declining for some time now, as it is in many small rural towns, and I am worried about the future of small business and services to our town and district without some other industry being developed.

Our community only survives on our volunteers working very hard to fund raise to provide better facilities and lifestyle for our people and for the future of the town and district. I challenge anyone to be able to come up with a better financial project that will have this scale of benefit for our community.

This project in the building stage will have many and varied benefits for businesses and job opportunities for the growth of our community. The National Radioactive Waste Facility will help sustain jobs and business now and in the future and I also foresee growth in the area of tourism.

I acknowledge there is a small, section of the community that has been vocal in working against the possibility of Kimba becoming the host town of this facility. I appreciate everyone's right to their opinions. Some specific behavior, however, is regrettable, and creates the impression of conflict and division. Those individual choices are disappointing and short sighted for the future of our community and district. Whatever happens, we have a decision to make together and we will be in it together.

Hopefully Kimba can be successful in housing this amazing radioactive waste facility. The process has been fair, open and transparent. We have most of the information we required. We are continuing to get further information as the assessment process proceeds, with assessments of the sites, like geotechnical, cultural heritage and the like. We have the ability to make an informed decision about a project that will have an impact on our local community. That decision should be left to the community in the District Council of Kimba. I request the rest of South Australia respect our decision-making ability, and the time we have invested in the process so far, and lets the process proceed.

Yours sincerely

Pat Beinke