

The Community Affairs References Committee has been charged with reporting on:
The social and economic impacts of rural wind farms, and in particular:

- (a) Any adverse health effects for people living in close proximity to wind farms;
- (b) Concerns over the excessive noise and vibrations emitted by wind farms, which are in close proximity to people's homes;
- (c) The impact of rural wind farms on property values, employment opportunities and farm income;
- (d) The interface between Commonwealth, state and local planning laws as they pertain to wind farms; and
- (e) Any other relevant matters.

I wish to make the following points for consideration by the committee in its conclusions:

1. The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) recently concluded that "there is currently no published scientific evidence to positively link wind turbines with adverse health effects."
2. Research by Adelaide consultancy Sonus has recently shown that low frequency noise levels at the beach and in the CBD are typically higher than near wind farms. Thousands of people choose to live in these environments.
3. Recent polling in regional NSW has shown that 85% support wind power with the majority supporting it in their communities. The project being undertaken by Hepburn Wind has already created three direct jobs, and has already spent more than \$2m in regional Victoria with more to come.
4. The Hepburn Wind project was subject to strict planning conditions through the approvals process and will be closely monitored for compliance with some of the strictest environmental controls in the world.
5. The Hepburn Wind project project will contribute \$1m to community initiatives over the next 25 years. In fact, it will be donating more to the community than it pays in lease fees to the landowner at the project site at Leonards Hill.
6. The Hepburn Wind project is expected to cost \$13m and generate more electricity each year than is used by the houses in Daylesford and much of the surrounding area. At the equivalent of less than \$6000/house, no other renewable energy solution comes close.
7. As is obvious, The Hepburn Wind project like other wind energy projects can REPLACE carbon-intensive power stations and generate electricity indefinitely without further addition to the world's greenhouse gas burden. Any small impact it may have must be considered in light of the major and ongoing costs and penalties (local and global) of the fossil fuel energy sources it replaces.

Dennis Long