



EmFSus

Emerald For Sustainability

“Putting the EMPHASIS on Sustainability”

Supported by Emerald Community House
PO Box 328, Emerald VIC 3782

www.emfsus.org.au

Senate Inquiry into the Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms
c/- community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Senators,

I write to you on behalf of Emerald for Sustainability (EmFSus), a not-for-profit, non-politically aligned, grass roots climate action group. Our focus is to work with residents, businesses and community groups in the Emerald district to reduce energy and water consumption, minimise waste and increase our biodiversity. We have approximately 110 people on our mailing list and are active and involved within our community of 7,000 residents.

EmFSus is an avid supporter of renewable energy and have a close working nexus with the Danendong Ranges Renewable Energy Association. It is quite clear to all of us at EmFSus that a variety of renewable energy installations, including wind turbines, is required to be installed with investment by our governments, businesses (including corporations) and members of our community to make the transition away from polluting coal fired power stations. To date there is a significant portion of EmFSus who have already invested in local renewable energy projects, as well as in the Hepburn wind farm.

Renewable energy, and wind in particular, is an essential part of our response to climate change, and the Senate Committee should not propose provisions that would make the development of this industry more difficult or onerous. Quite frankly, this is a no-brainer. In order for us to restore a safe climate we need government support, not hinderances, and I implore the Senate Committee to positively assist with these installations.

The Clean Energy Council, being the peak body representing Australia's clean energy sector states that there is no current research or scientific evidence that wind generation and therefore wind farms have an adverse effect on health. The NHMRC's Public Statement of July 2010 supports this also. The conclusion of the evidence review for that Statement, is quite clear, and I quote "The health effects of many forms of renewable energy generation, such as wind farms, have not been assessed to the same extent as those from traditional sources. However, renewable energy generation is associated with few adverse health effects compared with the well documented health burdens of polluting forms of electricity generation (Markandya & Wilkinson, 2007)."

Research conducted on modern wind turbines has shown that the levels of low frequency noise and infrasound are within accepted thresholds.

There is no statistical evidence that wind farms reduce property values. I would like to point out that there are members of the Emerald community who would be pleased to move to a location

where a community had wind farms in close proximity, should they be contemplating moving out of the area. Or alternatively have wind turbines installed in our own community.

The employment benefits are substantial and widely spread across regions, and provide considerable opportunities for individuals and communities where they are located, including the land owners who host turbines.

Wind represents a clean, safe source of power that will never run out. In making the transition away from polluting coal, wind will help clean up our air and water systems and improve the health of our communities.

Wind farms are widely supported in the Emerald community.

All levels of Government must embrace the urgent need for a rapid transition to 100% renewable energy, including wind generation, in order for us to restore a safe climate for all. We will not accept anything less.

Yours sincerely,

Lee Fuller (Mrs)
Convenor

8 February 2011