

8th February 2011

Department of the Senate
Community Affairs Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Re: The social and economic impact of rural wind farms

I am a resident of Portland in western Victoria and have worked at Keppel Prince Engineering for 27 years and have been directly involved in manufacturing wind towers for approximately 11 years.

I believe the main benefits from the renewable energy industry in our area are economic. Without the job opportunities the industry has presented it is likely myself and my family and many others would have been forced to move to the city to find employment. At Keppel Prince we employ and train apprentices, allowing young people to remain in rural areas. When large employers such as Borthwicks (abattoir) and CSR Softwoods have closed down Keppel Prince has taken on and trained many of those made redundant, giving them new opportunities.

Keppel Prince is one of the largest employers in town, with 450 workers. If we are busy the entire town and beyond feels the benefits.

In reference to the so-called health impacts of wind farms I have personally never seen anything that you could say was a problem health wise. I believe for those making these complaints it's a disease that requires a fiscal inoculation!

With regards to alternate forms of energy production I believe wind farms are far better option than some of the alternatives. I don't see too many people lined up to have a nuclear power station in their backyard.

Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,

David Mills