

Good morning Senators, and thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

My name is Nic Seton, and I am the Chief Executive Officer of Parents for Climate, a national organisation for parents, grandparents and carers with active supporters in every federal electorate. I am here on behalf of our 22,000 supporters, including over 500 mums and dads in the Northern Territory, who are deeply concerned about the proposed Middle Arm Industrial Precinct. You can see the signatures and photographs from 500 Territory families in this letter to parliament here (*to be held up*).

Today, I want to address three critical issues: the health concerns for our children, the climate impacts facing young Australians today and across their lifetimes, and the widespread alarm from parents in electorates across the country regarding federal funding for this project.

First, let's talk about health. Research shows that industrial projects like Middle Arm pose significant risks to the health of children and families. According to Dr. Michael Petroni's analysis, the proposed precinct could increase industrial fine particulate emissions by over 500%, drastically raising the risk of cancer and respiratory issues for local communities. The precinct, located less than 5 kilometres from Darwin and Palmerston, would expose children to pollutants associated with asthma, heart disease, and cancer. As parents, we cannot stand by while our children's health is compromised for the sake of industrial expansion.

Next, we must consider the climate impacts. We are in a critical decade for climate action. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns that we must halve global greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 to avoid catastrophic climate change. Yet the Middle Arm Industrial Precinct, designed to facilitate gas extraction, directly contradicts these goals. This project is designed to help unlock fracked gas from the Beetaloo basin releasing as much as 1.4 billion tCO₂-e and relies on unproven CCS technology, this will only accelerate climate change and endanger the futures of young Australians.

We should be investing in clean energy, not fossil fuels. By continuing to fund fossil fuel infrastructure, we are betraying our children's right to a livable planet.

The moral implications of expanding methane gas industries at this critical juncture cannot be overstated. Methane is a potent greenhouse gas, and its extraction and use will contribute significantly to the degradation of our climate. The actions we take in the remaining years and months of this decade are crucial to securing a safe climate for our children to thrive. The decision to proceed with the Middle Arm Industrial Precinct will result in pollution that will degrade the climate and environment for young Australians for the remainder of their lives. We may be the last generation of parents who enjoyed a greater quality of life at a lower cost than our children will.

As parents, as family members, as a community, Australians have a covenant to leave the world a better place for the next generation, not degraded and more dangerous. This principle is at the heart of our advocacy. Our children deserve a future where they can breathe clean air,

enjoy stable and healthy ecosystems, and inherit a planet that is not on the brink of climate catastrophe. Continued greenhouse gas pollution will mean children alive today will live through roughly three times as many disasters as their grandparents, worsened disease vectors, and rising costs of living. By pushing forward with the Middle Arm project, we are breaking this covenant and failing our moral obligation to protect the next generation.

Lastly, parents from all over Australia, including urban Labor electorates, are voicing their concerns about the use of public funds for this project. They have told me that they see this as a failure of leadership. Across the country, hundreds have participated in calling, writing to and meeting their MPs for the first time. They are doing this for their kids' best interests. The \$1.5 Billion promised in the federal budget amounts to a fossil fuel subsidy. This money could instead [recharge the Northern Territory](#) through investment in renewables and related infrastructure, with thousands of jobs, better energy security and lower costs of living. This issue transcends political lines and affects families nationwide. Public funds should not be used to subsidise fossil fuel expansion. This project not only undermines our national climate commitments but also puts the health and well-being of our communities at risk. It is a misuse of public money and a direct contradiction to the desires of parents who want a safe and sustainable future for their children.

The proposed Middle Arm Industrial Precinct stands to become the largest greenhouse gas emitter in the Northern Territory, contradicting our commitments under the Paris Agreement and undermining Australia's credibility on the global stage. We urge this committee to recognize that federal funding for this project is, in effect, a fossil fuel subsidy. It is a step backward at a time when we desperately need to move forward with clean, renewable energy solutions.

In closing, I ask the committee to consider the voices of parents and the health of our children. We must prioritise their futures by rejecting federal funding for the Middle Arm Industrial Precinct and redirecting it towards sustainable and healthy alternatives. Let us honour our moral duty and uphold our covenant with the next generation by leaving them a world that is better than the one we inherited. Thank you.