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**Opening Statement by the AEU NT
For the Middle Arm Industrial Precinct Senate Inquiry Hearing**

11 April 2024

Teachers across the Territory are steadfast in their rejection of the NT Government's plan to build the Middle Arm gas hub. Last year, teachers wrote an open letter to then Chief Minister Fyles calling for a reversal of the decision to frack the NT and to turn beautiful Darwin into an industrial wasteland. In just a few weeks well over 300 teachers signed the letter. That is a very significant portion of Territory teachers who not only share this view, but are willing to put their name to it and speak out against this madness.

Teachers are speaking out because we have a duty of care over, and strong relationships with, the kids we teach, and kids are the most vulnerable to the cancer, asthma and other illnesses that gas hubs like this cause. Sick kids cannot learn, sick teachers cannot teach, and sick communities cannot achieve the educational outcomes we all expect.

Beyond the immediate health issues, Middle Arm is synonymous with climate change which is rapidly making the NT unlivable and will make education here unworkable. Teachers feel increasingly hopeless because we are educating students for jobs and communities that may not exist, in towns and cities that may not even exist. This is emotionally distressing and professionally demoralizing, and it would be an abrogation of our professional duty of care not to condemn this project.