

*To: Senate Committee Inquiring into the EPBC Amendment Bill 2013 [Provisions]:*

As one who has lived in both rural and urban Australia, I have been appalled to see the impact and foreshadowed impact of Coal Seam Gas Mining on water, the environment and on people's lives, and I fully support intervention by the Federal Government to protect water and the environment from the ravages of CSG.

In regard to this inquiry into the Federal Government's Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment Bill 2013 [Provisions], I make the following comments:

1. As is clear from widespread concern about CSG, including concern expressed through membership of, for example, the Lock the Gate Alliance, the Bill is strongly supported in the community and bilaterally by electors;
2. Given damage already done by the industry, and foreshadowed damage, it is important that the Bill be passed quickly by the Senate;
3. Regarding content, it is a positive a) that the bilateral approval provisions of the EPBC Act cannot apply to coal and coal seam gas developments that will/may impact on water resources and b) that there are now some improvements to the exemptions.

Please ensure that exemptions contained in the Bill are minimised, and that key projects, such as the Arrow Coal Seam Gas project in Queensland and Camden in Western Sydney, are not given exemptions. (Accordingly, please remove s22 2b) and d)).

I would add this general observation: it is critical to protecting environmental resources in Australia and globally that renewable energy, including wind and solar, be actively promoted by governments. I urge that Parliament move urgently to practical measures - including proper funding of communities and support to renewables industries – that would implement the principle and I ask Senators to take this on board. Were that to be achieved, we would not be wasting precious time on destructive debates over environmentally disastrous industries like CSG.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Rosemary Webb.