

The committee received over 20,000 substantially similar campaign emails and letters.

An example is published below

Dear Members of the Inquiry Panel

Native Title Amendment (Indigenous Land Use Agreements) Bill 2017 Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the above Bill.

I make this submission today, hoping this government will adhere to the spirit of Native Title. Native Title exists so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the final say over what happens to their country, the land they've owned since before colonisation. Native Title groups spend on average up to 15 years to get their Native Title application approved, and this government tried to rush through changes in 24 hours, without consulting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Native Title must not be weakened at the whim of mining companies.

- The Bill has not been subject to proper consultation

There is no evidence that this Bill is urgent or that changes to native title laws need to be pushed through right now.

I have serious concerns about the way this Bill was rushed into Federal Parliament and is being pushed to a vote, without adequate consultation.

Any reforms should follow full and proper consultation with the people it impacts; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and their communities.

*Recommendation: The Bill should be withdrawn and proper consultation conducted with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, to allow real scrutiny of the adequacy of the current native title regime in supporting Indigenous land rights.

- The Bill will hasten the impacts of climate change

One of our primary concerns is about the impact mining will have on climate, this Bill will hasten the start of new mining projects and will negatively affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and their communities. As Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders communities are already the worst impacted by the causes of climate change. It is crucial that any decision that will increase the consequences of climate change is made with the consultation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and their communities.

- The Bill fails to recognise that corporations and mining companies often act dishonestly to divide indigenous communities to ensure their projects go ahead

It is clear that mining companies have a history, which continues today, of infiltrating and dividing Indigenous communities to ensure ILUAs are registered and projects proceed.

Common tactics include providing money and logistical support, crafting resolutions, paying members to attend meetings and arranging transport to bring non-members of a claim group who have no connection

to country to stack meetings in a mining company's favour. Recommendation: If the Bill is to proceed, at the bare minimum it should require that all representatives elected by a claim group must sign the ILUA for it to be valid.

- The Bill does not reflect the original aims of the Native Title Act

The Government has not provided any compelling evidence that the McGlade decision presents a real risk to past, existing or future ILUAs.

In reality the McGlade decision is faithful to the original intention of the Native Title Act. This intention was that all members of a Native Title Claimant must sign an ILUA, unless authorised by the wider native title group.

This is a just and logical position. Extinguishment of native title rights is a radical step with significant implications. Native title rights are held not just by communities but also by individuals. It would be unjust if these important rights could be extinguished by agreement of some but not all members of an Indigenous community.

*Recommendation: The Government be required to clearly identify, document and articulate the risks stemming from the McGlade decision to the community before moving forward with any changes.

- The Bill does not honour Australia's International Law obligations to ensure free, prior and informed consent before mining on Indigenous lands

Australia signed the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People in 2009. This binds the Commonwealth to ensuring the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous people to mining on their land. These principles are not reflected in the Bill.

*Recommendation: Any amendments to native title laws must be consistent with Australia's international obligations under the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People in 2009 which say mining cannot occur on Indigenous land without the free, prior and informed consent of Aboriginal people.

- The Bill should fix the real problem of someone dying or losing capacity, without weakening ILUA sign-on requirements

I would support a Bill being put forward to deal with the problem created where a person within a claim group has died or lost capacity. This is entirely different to a situation where members of a community object to a mining company working to extinguish their land rights against their will.

*Recommendation: A provision be made through amendments to the Native Title Act that provides for the streamlined removal and replacement of a claimant in the situation where the claimant has died or lost capacity.