

13 June 2007

The House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Industry and Resources
Department of the House of Representatives
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By Email: ir.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Sirs,

Inquiry into the development of the non-fossil fuel energy industry in Australia

I understand that the Standing Committee is investigating the impacts of renewable energy in Australia and finalising the *National Code for Wind Farms - A Discussion Paper* (May 2006). I say that a national code is urgently required to regulate wind farm proposals. Proposals are being lodged all over central Victoria without any real guidance other than the Victorian Governments Policy and Planning Guidelines for Development of Wind Energy Facilities in Victoria. These proposals are having a significant impact on rural communities throughout the state.

I have a personal interest as my family are presently faced with the proposed Tuki Wind Farm at Smeaton, Victoria. Since the proposal was announced in March this year, the lives of my family have been placed under considerable stress as it appears that most wind farms are given automatic approval by the Victorian State Government in an attempt to provide a visual and symbolic message that they are attempting to battle climate change. The impacts will be disastrous to our unique Australian landscape. The uncertainty and personal stress the proposal has placed upon my family cannot be measured and the proposal is taking a significant toll on my families health and mental well-being.

The Tuki Wind Farm proposal has had a profound impact on the Smeaton community. For instance:

- I have witnessed neighbours for and against the Proposal argue aloud in public, the most recent occurrence being at the second community 'consultation' session hosted by the proponent, Wind Power Pty Ltd, on 3 June 2007;
- I am aware of the theft of protest placards which have been placed on the fences and properties of residents opposed to the Proposal, removed, destroyed or stolen;
- I am aware of a resident opposed to the proposal being assaulted by a local male sporting club for his stance against the proposal, which occurred on 3 June 2007 and was witnessed by his young son;
- I know that certain opposing residents are too afraid to write a letter to the local paper for fear of a backlash against them personally.

It is clear to me that the neighbourly relationships and trust within the Smeaton community have been shattered by the Tuki Wind Farm proposal. Whether or not the Proposal proceeds, I am doubtful the fractured relationships between neighbours, families and friends will ever be restored fully.

I urge the Standing Committee to consider fully the social impacts of wind farm proposals. The human cost of wind farm developments has been disregarded in State and local planning regulations. One's quality of life and the relationships with those around them, should be given utmost priority in considering the development of renewable energy.

Yours faithfully,

BRAD EVANS

10/25/04