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18 MAR 2009

Sen Ho
ELECT

10th March 2009

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you as a very concerned mother and resident of the Liverpool Plains N.S.W.

As you may not be aware we have large coal/gas mining companies knocking on our door, which is very distressing, as we are one of the "FOOD BOWLS" of Australia.

I am not anti-mining however it is crucial that these companies be made accountable for their actions. As this area is a flood plain, long wall mining will cause devastating changes in topography, which will lead to unknown but possibly catastrophic erosion issues. Being part of the Namoi Catchment which feeds into the Murray Darling Basin, which is environmentally sensitive to Eastern Australia.

The Liverpool Plains is a key contributor to the nation's food supplies. Crop yields are consistently 40% above the national average according to the government's own statistics.

We have reliable summer and winter rainfall and exceptionally fertile organic soils, which support a variety of crops and grazing options. These total over 1,000 enterprises, and according to ABARE the Plains produce 35% (over one third) of N.S.W. total summer crop. This contributes at least \$332 million to GDP from our top 5 agriculture commodities alone (cattle, cereals, sorghum, wheat, cotton/barley)

So I express grave concerns for this area as it is one of the very few rich agricultural food producing areas left in Australia, and we need to preserve it for "Food Security".

One of our 3 boys is studying an Agricultural Degree, which we encourage and would hope the Australian Government sees this as an investment for the future of this country. However what incentive does he have, if the government is going to allow mining into these prime food production areas without accountability?

Experience shows there are serious issues relating to coal and gas mining. Flawed state planning laws offers unsustainable, short term gain and long term devastation of food and water supplies through soil and water degradation and highly toxic pollution. Coal mining communities have a 70% increase in kidney diseases, 64% increase in respiratory diseases, 30% increase in high blood pressure, all of which has a detrimental effect on the health spending system as well.

According to Professor Julian Cribbs UTS:

- Total world food demand is forecast to rise 110% in the next 40 years.
- Farming output will need to double using only 2/3 of today's water volume.

With water becoming such a scarce commodity it is imperative that we look after our prime land, as the Liverpool Plains is the definition of Agricultural Land.

I am calling on the Australian Government to legislate to protect Australian prime agricultural land and have it treated as a national asset.

I hope that you consider these implications seriously and I would be appreciative of your response.

Yours Sincerely



Petrina Ronald