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Senator the Hon Bill Heffernan
Suite 703, Westfield Towers, 100 William Street
Sydney NSW 2011

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16 MAR 2009

Sen Hon W Heffernan
ELECTORATE OFFICE

Dear Senator Heffernan,

In a time of global warming, increasing population growth world wide and an ever decreasing area of land available for food production, I am writing to express my grave concerns for the survival of one of our prime food producing areas, The Liverpool Plains. Hopefully you have already heard about the threat from large mining corporations on this 'rich' agricultural area in northern NSW. I would like to know what you are going to do about it.

The Liverpool Plains lies just over the Great Dividing Range from the Hunter Valley. I say 'rich' because the soils are fertile volcanic soils producing a variety of crops for food production and consumption; the water is of high quality and quantity and contributes to the Murray Darling system; and the air we breathe is clean.

The Liverpool Plains has been known to continue to produce crops through periods of drought when many areas are unable to produce anything; our crop yields are consistently 40% above the national average according to ABARE figures and the area is capable of producing summer and winter crops, 3 crops in 2yrs is not unusual. We contribute \$332 million to GDP from our top 5 agricultural commodities alone according to NAMS.

At a time when food security is being discussed at all levels, it is vital you understand where the food s are and that you work towards protecting these prime agricultural areas from mining development. We cannot afford to take the risks imposed on us by 'mining giants'. These risks are far too great. We need to protect our food production, including our water supply and volcanic soils; the quality of the air we breathe, as well as our democratic and property rights, and our sense of community. If we do not do this now, what will be left for the generations to come?

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,



Susan Willis