

23 October 2005

The Secretary  
Senate Community Affairs References Committee  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee Members

RE: Senate Inquiry on Petrol Sniffing

Petrol sniffing is killing and injuring the brains of hundreds of young Aboriginal People in the Central Deserts region of Australia.

Opal fuel is a new non-sniffable petrol that could reduce sniffing if it were the only fuel available across the region, especially in the major towns like Alice Springs and Tennant Creek.

It would cost around \$10 million per annum to do this - less than 1% of the \$3 billion in fuel subsidies going to mining companies, farmers and others through the energy grants scheme. It is a fraction of the future costs of caring for people who are physically and intellectually disabled from sniffing.

Opal is not a stand-alone solution but is a proven and effective part of community-focused strategies to reduce sniffing.

Over 700 young people are sniffing in the Central Deserts region.

Please help these Indigenous Australians before it is too late.

Yours sincerely

David McKelvey