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**To:** Economics, Committee (SEN)  
**Subject:** Petrol Issues

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*The Senate Economics Legislation Committee is inquiring into the price of petrol in Australia, with particular reference to:*

- 1. the relationship between the landed price of crude oil, refining costs, the wholesale price and the retail price of petrol;*
- 2. regional differences in the retail price of petrol;*
- 3. variations in the retail price of petrol at particular times;*
- 4. the industry's integrated structure; and*
- 5. any other related matters.*

Dear members of the Inquiry

The price of petrol continues to be a major sore point for people across Australia, unless they are so wealthy that they care not which of their 10 plus cars they drive or what goes in them.

Yet the federal government continues to blame overseas factors and the states for their own abject failure to do anything whatsoever to help the people of this nation survive these growingly harsh economic times. Indeed, they still blame Mr. Keating for private debt, the recession, the assassination of President Kennedy, the invasion of Poland and the destruction of the hanging gardens of Babylon.

1. Years ago I worked for Mayne Nickless Armaguard and I well recall Mobil and other refineries having notes internally on their notice boards advising that petrol would go up, when and by how much. I recall a couple of independents going public about pricing too - what happened to them? Or are the big boys threatening as does happen in Australia (not just overseas)
2. I am deeply concerned that IF we go down the ethanol track, the Australian supply is already a monopoly, and the owner is a close mate of John Winston Howard. How will that be fair to the rest of the nation?
3. How do we even know if ethanol is safe? Explosive? wastes more quickly? etc we have no idea other than car manufacturers saying that this stuff will ruin car engines. Liberal MPs say that is rubbish. What is the truth?

4. How do we know that our petrol is clean? I have certainly bought petrol from stations and found it go down very very quickly for comparatively low mileage (kilometres). This is a state issue, though (I assume) and state Ministers like Marsha Thomson (no "p") MUST be taken to task for not being tough on checks and prosecutions in this regards.
5. Have alternatives been fully examined? If not, what is stopping the federal government other than wanting to maintain the mega wealth that they procure from the motorists, lawn mower owners and all others who use fuel in Australia. How much si being spent on researching alternatives. AND if they are found, will the government consider suspending GST on the new supplies and even vehicles to encourage a mass take up?
6. GST on other taxes is an absolute joke but Mr. Costello - whom I knew when he was Monash ALP Club Vice President, marching against Kerr, Fraser and, oh yes, Howard - seems to care little. It should be illegal to tax a tax. Certainly it is unethical - so *that's* why we have it.
7. Profiteering by petrol companies is an outrage, as proved by the brilliant Today Tonight on many occasions. When, if ever, will Mr Howard act? Or, to be cynical, are all the owners and company directors Liberal party members? Crude oil prices up 2.5 cents recently without public notice. Caltex at least tell us their mega profits but every one of the companies should be required by law to tell us their profits every three months without duding the figures.
8. The petroleum companies should also have their taxes reviewed. IF they can hit us as hard as they do and affect the entire nation then there should be special legislation to tax them accordingly AND prevent their shifting monies, property ownership... overseas. Other nations are already targeting them in a similar fashion but to date we have failed.
9. Inquiries without actual results for us only add to our rage. we have seen far too many inquiries with NO results and if this is yet another, why should we trust any current serving MP from any side of politics/?
10. Drive offs affect the actual petrol station and could cause risks of other crimes. can anything be done to help prevent this crime growing even more?
11. Faulty equipment robbing customers - 18% of bowsers in Victoria last year and 25% this year are faulty. Again this si a state issue ion the main and state ministers must be targeted; but we need Canberra to target them and to bring in legislation at a national level that the states and territories must endorse re such issues. we are paying and getting less, and anywhere else this would have been resolved twenty plus years ago. But not with petrol companies.
12. Car sellers not supportive enough of LPG. My dad bought a new Toyota a year ago, his last ever car he sais given his age. but when I asked the salesman at one of the largest dealerships in Victoria about LPG he was most unsupportive and uncooperative. It reminded me of 12 years earlier when we built our home and our builder had no idea when I asked about solar power... IF LPG is cheaper and cleaner etc then every new car owner should have the option of petrol or LPG. Every second hand car owner should be able to replace the petrol tank, with NO GST on the LPG

tank to encourage its purchase and installation. that is, if you are serious about these issues.

13. And what about the price of LPG? At least one senior RACV manager has for years been touting higher prices for LPG. What a tragedy if this clowns ever gets his pathetic way.
14. Fuel savers... need to be checked by gov't and if as they claim, they save petrol and reduce waste/ increase efficiency... then reduce or even eliminate GST (e.g. one on ABC Inventors 2006) and if not legitimate, prosecute to the hilt.
15. Back to pricing, why did a recent survey find that the dearest petrol in all Melbourne is in my area of Niddrie (next to Essendon)? Ofcourse travelling as much as I do I have tried in vein to get this very message into the media for years without success but the real issue is the 'why'?
16. How much is really spent from petrol taxes on our roads? How much of what we pay in petrol tax is spent where it was promised/ legislated to be?

And I could go on and on...

We are having an Inquiry into petrol prices, one of the last inquiries that the Senate will ever again have now that Mr Howard has cuts out its teeth - unless the minority take him on and still run your own inquiries regardless of Howard's dictatorship as backed by Abetz and others who should have retired at the end of the Triassic period.

But we must all be involved in this inquiry and seek not only answers but results. If this is only just another inquiry with no positive outcome then it will be a massive joke upon the drivers of Australia.

This may be the last chance to begin the new road that we must take if we are to be able to afford petrol twenty years from now

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