

From: Rice, David
Sent: Monday, 7 August 2006 7:42 PM
To: Economics, Committee (SEN)
Subject: Inquiry into the provisions of the Price of Petrol in Australia

Committee Secretary
Senate Economics Committee
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Dear Sir,

Inquiry into the provisions of the Price of Petrol in Australia

I work in transport planning in Western Australia and have had a long interest in how we might better plan transport against the background that roads, railways, ports and suburbs have a long life. This may be 50 to 100 years, probably longer if you allow that the subdivision patterns are unlikely to change much, even if the road pavement or rail line or port berth will need upgrading.

I point this out to give a timescale to the considerations that Australia needs when considering our energy futures.

There is ample evidence that global supplies of oil are finite, and that supply is about to be exceeded by demand; the numerous submissions to the Senate inquiry into transport fuel are one source of such information.

My submission is limited to requesting that, whatever short term (1 to 5 year) conclusions you draw about petrol pricing, you bear in mind the need to prepare the Australian public for substantial global oil price rises (doubling or trebling, not just a few more cents/litre) in the medium term (say 5 to 15 years). This means sending the right price signals to vehicle purchasers to buy more fuel efficient vehicles, planning organisations to plan for accessibility by proximity rather than by mobility, and a myriad of other decisions which, collectively, will mean Australia is in as strong as possible a position to cope with high fuel prices.

We need these signals now, propping up low petrol prices will send perverse signals.

Yours sincerely,

David Rice
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