

McMahon, Rosalind (SEN)

From: Imogen.Hamel-Green@union.unimelb.edu.au
Sent: Friday, 18 November 2005 5:07 PM
To: EET, Committee (SEN)
Subject: Submission regarding Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Bill

To whom it may concern,

As one of two Environment Officers in the Melbourne University Student Union, I wish to express my opposition to the the proposed Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Bill.

I note that the federal government has failed to make any compelling case for the urgency of this legislation and I am concerned that the inquiry period has not been long enough to fully investigate the complexity of the issues involved.

Furthermore, there has been no consultation with the NT government or community, traditional Aboriginal landowners or those who live on the proposed transport routes about whether the location of a radioactive waste storage facility is acceptable to these parties. Moreover, given that all political parties in the NT are opposed to the imposition of a waste dump in their territory, I consider it deeply problematic that the committee has not travelled to the NT to hear directly from the most directly affected community. I note that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) maintains that waste management facilities such as the one proposed by the legislation require community consent and a reasonable degree of 'social license'. The imposition of this legislation would therefore inconsistent with international obligation.

Finally, the legislation currently under consideration would allow the proposed NT waste dump to be turned into an international radioactive waste dump housing highly radioactive materials from all around the world. This will potentially foster dependence upon nuclear energy as a source of energy, thereby increasing the risk of nuclear weapons proliferation and devastating nuclear accidents.

Yours sincerely,

Imogen Hamel-Green