

McMahon, Rosalind (SEN)

From: Patricia Collins [trish@cahill.net.au]
Sent: Friday, 18 November 2005 3:11 PM
To: EET, Committee (SEN)

Senate Inquiry Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Bill 2005

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From: Patricia Collins [mailto:trish@cahill.net.au]
Sent: Friday, 18 November 2005 2:59 PM
To: 'eet.sen@aph.gov.au'
Subject: Submission to Senate Inquiry Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Bill 2005

Dear Senators

I am writing as an urban and regional planner but also as someone lucky enough to have lived in the Northern Territory including the Katherine Region as a child and later as the Katherine Regional Planner with the Northern Territory Government Department responsible for land use planning.

I am particularly concerned that good land use planning practices are being ignored if the Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Bill 2005 is passed. Land use decision-making should be informed by scientific and technical advice and participatory community processes. Locational decisions should not be made on the basis of which communities or groups have the least ability to protect themselves from arbitrary decisions.

In the current Bill it is hard to see how Territorians are not being treated as second-class Australian citizens. Particularly when a personal election promise to Territorians by the Minister for the Environment, Senator Campbell has been broken on this issue and in only the last few days he has made statements saying that it is not right to force a wind farm on a Western Australian Community that does not want it. Communities in the Territories should have just as much right to have their voices respected as communities in State jurisdictions.

In 1998 Territorians did not vote for Statehood because they responsibly looked at the record of the longterm incumbent Country Liberal Party (CLP) and believed that a federal government was likely to be less partisan and more responsible than a CLP government. It is disappointing that Territorians trust in the federal government and politicians from other States to govern responsibly on behalf of all Australians, including Territorians, is being destroyed by this Bill.

A land use decision-making process for locating a site or sites for radio-active waste should include all States and Territories and be undertaken through a COAG managed process that involves local community participation.

I would also like to draw the Senator's attention to:

- . ground water and flooding issues in the Katherine Region as well as defence facilities and activities in the region which should be fully investigated during this inquiry;
- . the need to fully include Indigenous Australians needs and voices in community planning and decision-making in the siting of any radioactive waste facility and refer Senators to the outcomes of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody on the value of community planning as a form of self-determination; and
- . ensuring communities along the routes of transported radio-active waste also have the opportunity to fully participate in land use decision-making processes.

yours sincerely
 Patricia Collins MPIA