

To Whom It may Concern,

My name is Lindell White. I am a Mother of two children and a resident of East Gippsland. My area of employment is in the welfare and disabilities fields. My voluntary work consists of environmental conservation work and other social/community activities concerning the welfare of other beings. I have also studied economics, political economy and sociology. I also rent a farm and my family works it.

I am opposed to the introduction of a Free Trade Agreement with the U.S.A. My main concern with it is the possibility that the U.S government will have a right to be involved with the construction or deconstruction, if you will, of laws and regulations that effect the day to day lives of citizens of this fine country of ours, Australia.

I am also aware that the U.S may gain the right to affect laws made specifically in relation to environment, public services etc.

I ask you, what right should people and organisations/ corporations, that do not live/ function in this country have to be involved in decisions that effect legitimate citizens and residents.

I draw your attention to the already 'skyrocketing' cost of living due to moves previously made toward deregulation. For the people that fall through the "safety net" what hope will they have of starting again in a market where they cannot challenge so much competition. The idea that only the fittest should survive should be pushed into a dark corner of our memories.

I am in total fear with just the thought that, the wonderful culture and way of life we have built up in this country could possibly become more like the American 'system' - with their "huddled masses" of street people who seem to have been forgotten by the 'system' (some living in communities in the underground railways and sewers), their crime problems and terrible record of environmental destruction and human rights abuses.

I believe there are alternatives to solving the problems of a welfare state, the ever increasing demands on the public systems and also, the sustainability vs. economy issue.

What kind of democracy is it when a minority of faceless people/ corporations are making the decisions for us? All through history there are examples of what can happen when this becomes the case. More often than not it has not been a pretty picture.

I urge you with my whole being to demand that measures are put in place in any agreement made, for the protection of our rights as people of a democratic nation. I urge you also, to help ensure that the precious natural resources of this country are protected and kept as public/ state assets as if they are a 'nestegg' prepared for OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE.

Please forgive me if I have not used the correct format for this submission. It is done from the heart, for a passion for all Australians and the beauty of this "sunburnt land".

Yours Sincerely,
Lindell White.