

26th August, 2008

Committee Secretary,
Senate Committee on fuel & energy;

Submission re Fuel Energy Security.

Dear Sir,

Australia is at present hugely dependant on imported oil to supply energy needs. The Federal Minister for Energy recently warned that oil imports are set to blow out from 20% in the 1990s to 80 % of our needs in 2015; this would greatly increase our net foreign debt, currently at \$610bn, or 61% of GDP. New oil fields may or may not be found in the meantime. Australia must look for alternate ways of supplying energy needs; one way would be to develop a major biofuel industry, i.e. a major sugar-cane based ethanol industry. By using 40% of the current sugar-cane crop, it would provide 10% ethanol in all petrol driven cars, and the total crop can be increased, thus benefiting our sugar cane farmers.

Brazil built a major ethanol industry to combat increasing oil imports during the 1970s oil crisis; Australia can do the same for the same reason. In addition, greater use of our gas supplies could reduce our reliance on petrol-driven cars. Forwarded for your consideration.

Mr. J. Hanrahan