

Parliament of Australia

Senate Inquiry

The Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms

From: Councillor Geoff White

My submission to the Senate Inquiry is based on my experience as a local Councillor of 14 years experience and 4 terms as Mayor and from my knowledge of wind farms in the Glenelg Shire.

Glenelg Shire has a wild, wind swept, rugged coastline that has attracted the wind power generation industry given the prospective farming of these reliable, predominantly south westerly winds.

Portland in particular has heavy industry as its economic mainstay. This industry has assisted in the construction of the wind towers and in turn the wind industry has added to the employment base of the shire. In addition, other direct and indirect employment opportunities have assisted the local economy largely around the need for additional accommodation, trades people and food and beverages. Furthermore, the Glenelg Shire Council rates are enhanced by the revenue received from the wind industry with the community also benefiting from the grants offered by the wind energy companies.

Finally, I would like to submit that whilst I acknowledge there has been adverse impacts on residents in proximity to wind farms there is nevertheless strong support for the industry in the shire with as I understand at least 85% of residents supporting the industry.