To: the Senate Community Affairs Committee

Re. The Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms

Our comments regarding rural wind farms in particular, and wind farms in general, are as follows:

1. Wind farms must only be located in unpopulated or sparsely-populated areas (which terms both need to be defined). The definition of "rural" itself must also be defined carefully, then standardised across planning schemes, to minimise or avoid the possibility of loopholes that will work against the communities affected. An adequate minimum buffer zone must be established and enforced.

   From the volumes of information being circulated on the Internet, there appear to be serious health and environmental issues regarding the effects of wind farms located in near-vicinity of populated areas. Although we cannot comment as being experts on this, the sheer weight of such information gives us major concern regarding health aspects of closely-located wind farms. Any Committee established must include eminent and objective personnel to investigate and analyse scientifically and objectively such information.

2. In broad terms, there are also questions as to the economic effectiveness, efficiency and benefits of wind farms in general, especially considering the source of the power – it's not always windy, and then alternate energies are needed just to keep the turbines in motion. Logically, this would be expected to offset considerably any environmental or economic gains.

3. Federal, state and local authorities must achieve a common, consistent and binding agreement that applies to all 3 levels of government.

4. We are not *per sé* against wind farms as a source of renewable energy. However, we believe it is morally and ethically wrong that the community is "bulldozed" into accepting the wholesale introduction of wind farms, by both 'green fanatics' and vested-interest groups (like turbine manufacturers, and their lobby groups), without proper and objective scrutiny.

With Sincere Regards,

Harry and Kerrie Buskes