

Submission to the Federal Senate inquiry into the Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms.

I am frustrated that our state and federal governments are not doing enough to address climate change. It seems that the voices of the vocal minority of climate change deniers are heard and taken notice of much more than those of the quiet majority who see the impacts of climate change already occurring, and who would be prepared to do something about it if only our leaders would heed the warnings.

Renewable energy, and wind farms in particular, are an important means of reducing our reliance on fossil fuel-based electricity. Examples of community-owned wind farms confirm the benefits that can be derived by local communities. The following key points directly relate to the inquiry's terms of reference, which include the investigation of:

any adverse health effects for people living in close proximity to wind farms

The (NHMRC) recently concluded that "there is currently no published scientific evidence to positively link wind turbines with adverse health effects."

concerns over the excessive noise and vibrations emitted by wind farms, which are in close proximity to people's homes

by Adelaide consultancy Sonus has recently shown that low frequency noise levels at the beach and in the CBD are typically higher than near wind farms.

the impact of rural wind farms on property values, employment opportunities and farm income

in regional NSW has shown that 85% support wind power with the majority supporting it in their communities.

In regional Victoria, the Hepburn Wind community-based wind farm project has already created three direct jobs, and has already spent more than \$2m in regional Victoria with more to come.

The Hepburn Wind project will contribute \$1m to community initiatives over the next 25 years, and will donate more to the community than it pays in lease fees to the landowner at Leonards Hill.

Hepburn Wind is expected to cost \$13m and generate more electricity each year than is used by the houses in Daylesford and much of the surrounding area.

the interface between Commonwealth, state and local planning laws as they pertain to wind farms.

The Hepburn Wind project was subject to strict planning conditions through the approvals process and will be closely monitored for compliance with some of the strictest environmental controls in the world.

I ask that the Inquiry note my comments in favour of wind farms generally.