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Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

By email: community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Sir / Madam,

Subject: Inquiry into the Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms

I am an employee in the wind farm industry and take this opportunity to state my whole-hearted support for this industry, both in terms of the opportunities it has offered myself, but mainly in respect to it's benefits to the regional communities where wind farms are to be found.

I come from a marginal regional farming background in the Mallee in Victoria, and am well aware of the multitude of risks associated with making a stable living from the land. It is therefore a key motivator for myself to be part of an industry that provides a number of key benefits to regional communities, namely:

- Investment in local businesses for all manner of services and supplies, allowing these local businesses to expand and employ additional local resources;
- Investment and/or funds for use in the community to develop or support community infrastructure projects, or not for profit organisations, usually at the discretion of the community's decision-makers;
- Sponsorship for regional cultural events or sporting groups to enhance or promote such local community opportunities;
- To provide an additional, secure source of income to farmers to assist them to "drought-proof" their businesses, i.e ride through climatic circumstances of flood, drought etc;
- By providing additional income to these farmers, the industry entices future generations of regional youth to consider farming as a viable employment opportunity, halting the migration of the regional youth to larger population centres in search of employment.
- By creating alternate short and long term employment opportunities in regional Australia, either in the construction of the windfarms or the ongoing operations and maintenance of the windfarms.

I am an employee of Suzlon Energy Australia Pty Ltd (Suzlon). Suzlon is a wind turbine manufacturer and a wind farm turnkey contractor, that directly employs over 250 permanent people across Australia. We have staff located in our Melbourne head office, on project site offices through Victoria, South Australian and New South Wales, and at our warehousing facility in Jamestown, South Australia.

I am unaware, nor have I ever come across anyone, in my seven (7) years in the wind industry, who has had any adverse health effects as a result of living or working in the vicinity of an operating wind farm. I am also unaware, or seen any evidence to support, that windfarms have any adverse impact on property values. Invariably windfarms result in the improvement of road infrastructure in their vicinity and farmers remain able

to continue their usual agricultural practices largely uninterrupted during the operational phase of wind energy projects.

I do not support the introduction of an arbitrary setback distance between dwellings and proposed wind turbines of 2km as proposed in Victoria, this would render a large proportion of proposed wind farm projects unviable. The application of such arbitrary setback distances is without specific scientific basis and is inconsistent with the assessment framework applied to approval of other infrastructure projects.

I thank the Committee for accepting this submission and look forward to a pragmatic and accurate, fact-based assessment of the issues associated with wind farms,

Yours faithfully

Chris Judd
Director – Sales and Marketing
Suzlon Energy Australia Pty Ltd