

INFORMATION RE: NEW AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL SENATE ENQUIRY INTO  
“EXCESSIVE NOISE FROM WINDFARMS BILL” to amend the

Renewable Energy Act.

30 October 2012.

Open Submission from-

Phillip Duggan

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

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I live at the above address which is situated about 600 metres a wind farm. The facility consists of two 125 metre high wind turbines which sit on the top of Leonards Hill and tower over my house which is downhill from them. The turbines started operating in July 2011.

I moved to Leonards Hill with my partner to start a new life after being diagnosed with HIV. After a couple of bouts of cancer and pneumonia we both thought it best to move away from Melbourne to see if my health would improve. We bought the house in Leonards Hill in 1998 and after a couple of months my health improved 100-fold to the extent where my HIV viral load was undetectable. The country life certainly agreed with me, and we more than happy to live out our days in this rural paradise.

Fast forward to October 2012 and I have now been living under the shadow of these two wind turbines for 1 year and 3 months.

After adjusting to the initial shock of the sheer size of these two turbines sitting on the hill above our home the noise started. The racket sounds like a jet flying overhead that never goes away. If you sit outside all you can hear is the constant whooshing of the blades. Some days are worse than others depending on the wind direction, but it is constant. There is no room in the house where you can escape it. As I type this letter I can hear them quite loudly, it is a low throbbing pulsating hum. I began to get headaches that I have never experienced before. My doctor said they were pressure headaches and prescribed me with pain killers (Panadeine Forte) 2 tablets 4 times a day. (I'm still taking this dose to alleviate the pain). Then I started waking up at odd hours of the morning, EVERY morning. No matter how tired I was, I would wake up 2 to 3 hours after going to sleep. Now I take sleeping pills (Temazepan- 1-2 pills nightly) to try and get a good night's sleep. Even when I sleep I can feel them pulsating like a white flash in my head. My partner started to lose the plot and tried to commit suicide. This stressed me out even more. Now I take pills to stop me stressing (Diazepam 5mg – 1 daily) too much and hold it together. We take trips away with our pets (who are suffering as well ) when it gets too much and we have beautiful unbroken sleeps and feel like our old selves.

I have complained to the planning department of the shire I live in but have been fobbed off continually. Because this facility is a "community wind farm" people I use to socialise with who are members now distance themselves from us and think we are making it up and exaggerating. I have withdrawn completely from social contact with people I use to class as friends and have become a virtual pariah in the town I once loved. I am not healthy anymore and have been diagnosed with clinical depression. I don't want to start taking anti-depressants as it will clash with my medication for HIV. I can no longer undertake full-time work as I am too tired and as such earn less money. Now I'm stressed that we may lose our home because I can't keep up mortgage payments!.

I think we have been treated very badly and I know something bad will happen to us if we stay in our house under these conditions. But we can't afford to move as we spent all our money on our little dream house so we have to tough it out and put up with all this noise and negativity that now surrounds us. I hope this brief note to you helps.

This is why I support these proposed amendments to the Renewable Energy Act

Yours sincerely,

Phillip Duggan 31/10/2012