From:
To: Committee, EC (SEN)
Cc:
Subject: senate inquiry excessive noise from windturbines
Date: Tuesday, 30 October 2012 5:11:55 PM

I very much support these proposed amendments to the Renewable Energy Act:

My Submission to the Australian Federal Senate inquiry into Excessive NOISE because we have been forced to leave our family home because of the excessive noise and health effects wind turbines have been built too close to our family home. (900m)

RE: Waubra Wind Farm

This wind farm is currently a NON-COMPLIANT wind Energy facility, over a period of three years I have made numerous representations to State and Federal MP'S, the EPA the Department of health, the Pyrenees Shire and the developer ACCIONA ENERGY all to no avail.

We have 4200 acres at Waubra of high quality farming land and are currently running 19,500 sheep 500 acres of crop and 100 acres irrigated land.

Our home is 800 to 900 metres from 4 turbines closely clustered together and we have 7 turbines within 2 km from our family home. Our entire farm which we work is surrounded by turbines. So we are exposed all day and night.

Our bedroom is closest to the turbines some nights you put your head on the pillow and all that you can hear is the constant noise and the constant rotation of the turbine blades. I cannot put in words how the turbines sound. They sound like nothing else I have ever heard before.

The noise from the turbines in certain conditions is unbearable and makes our home life and workplace on the farm unbearable to be in. Some say it is like the sound of a plane taking off, but the noise does not leave.

Since the day the wind energy facility commenced operations, members of my family have experienced various symptoms including excruciating painful ear pressure, severe headaches, severe nausea to the point of being unable to keep food down, profuse nose bleeds, dizziness, chronic and severe sleep disturbance and worrying chest pains. We have never suffered any of these symptoms before the wind farm was built too close to our home at Waubra. These symptoms only occur when we are home and the turbines are operating. After 18 months our symptoms were that bad and a number of doctor visits, our family doctor advised us to move from our home which we have done. My family's health has improved we

are all back to the way we where before wind turbines where built in our area. But our farm is our workplace and we now travel back there every day to work and still get many of the symptoms when we are around the turbines and only when the turbines are operating. It has completely destroyed our lives and the way we run our business, we are now cut off from our old way of life.

We recently signed up our daughter for a four year farming apprenticeship. As she works longer hours, she is now exposed to the same damaging environment as Carl and I. Her physical symptoms are now becoming obvious eg: ear pressure, nausea, headaches and dizziness. This is her life, this is the career she has chosen and is so good at. The serious and damaging negative impact the adverse health effects wind turbines cause is a huge concern, even a threat to the industry.

Firstly on our farm but anywhere these wind energy facilities are operating or where permits have been granted. Waubra is a very poorly planned development with no obvious guidelines to protect landholders. Are we not supposed to be encouraging young people to have a career in the rural industry? As parents to Courtney do we not have a duty of care to protect her health and wellbeing?

In the mad rush of government of all persuasions to produce clean, green energy, they have ignored the plight of their constituents, and abdicated their collective duty of care to protect human health. We hold the federal and state local government both elected representatives and public servants, directly responsible for the extremely difficult situation we have been placed in, and the ongoing damage being done to our family's health.

We have massive concerns about the health effects of living and working to close to the wind turbines in January of this year we have conducted noise testing at our Lobbs Rd home at Waubra. Dr Bob Thorne of Noise Measurement Services. Bob Thorne recorded sound levels at our home for a number of weeks sound from the Waubra wind farm when measured at Lobbs Rd exceeded the criteria and is therefore to be NON-COMPLIANT on a frequent and regular basis with or without special audible characteristics penalty applied under NZ S6808 standards.

In June of this year we conducted another noise report with Steve Cooper and he set up noise monitors inside and outside our home in Lobbs Rd. He left the noise monitors at home for a number of months. Once again the noise level from the turbines operating 900m from our home is once again NON-COMPLIANT.

How is this wind farm still allowed to operate this wind farm is currently a NON-COMPLIANT wind energy facility, how is it still allowed to operate we have 2 NON-COMPLIANT independent reports on Waubra wind farm. How is it still allowed to operate so close to our home.

If you care for the health and well-being of families living too close to wind turbines could you please take the matter of the noise and health effects from living so close to the Waubra wind turbines very seriously . We as Australians do not just walk away from our family homes we built ten years ago on our farm at Waubra.

I just don't understand how a NON-COMPLIANT wind farm can still operate if the Victorian planning minister has not signed off on the wind farm.

I am no expert, I am a farmer and mother of three children. We are living proof that wind turbines built too close to homes is not the answer , I am worried that the Federal Government is going to drive many more families off their farms.

The Government has failed to protect the health of my family, Please don't let what has happened to my family and I happen to anyone else.

Samantha Stepnell