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Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications
Environment and Communications Legislation Committee

**INQUIRY: Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Retaining Federal Approval Powers) Bill 2012 [Provisions]**

I am writing to register my support for the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Retaining Federal Approval Powers) Bill 2012.

I have viewed with deep concern the recent moves by business, state governments and lobby groups to remove or diminish Federal control over environmental protection processes.

I believe these attempts to be focussed on short-term profit-making at the expense of the environment and Australia's long term future.

Any move to hand important federal approval powers to the states, and fast track approvals for large developments, will remove Federal protection for our most special places and wildlife, and accelerate destructive development in our reefs, forests and wetlands to the long term detriment of us all.

State governments have a track record of failing to protect important environmental assets in the pursuit of narrowly and locally focussed parochial or economic goals at the expense of broader national goals and values. In this context the ability of the Federal government under the EPBC Act to take a broader view of the national good is critical. I urge the Government to defend these powers and resist any moves to weaken them or hand them over to state governments, and I reiterate my support for the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Retaining Federal Approval Powers) Bill 2012.

Yours sincerely,

Lenore Keough