

Maria Linke

I support these proposed amendments to the Renewable Energy Act. I have lived on our property for twenty years and it is now I feel the most vulnerable for our future livelihood. The uncertainty of what lies ahead is worrying and alarming.

About five kilometres west of us is the Macarthur Wind Farm. Which when completed will be the largest wind farm (in megawatts), in the southern hemisphere.

Upon returning from an overseas trip, I immediately noticed adverse health effects. I am restless and not sleeping well. In the short time I have been home, I am noticing a pattern already. When the wind is in the west, and also if it is very mild, with no or little wind, I have trouble sleeping, and pressure in my ears builds up. I am really alarmed at how quickly I have noticed these symptoms, as the Macarthur Wind Farm is only in the testing phase with a small number of turbines turning. What is it going to be like when 140 turbines are spinning? The fear of the unknown. What are our health consequences going to be? We live and work on our farm, if the noise from the wind factory forces us from our house, how will we operate our business?

Since the commencement of the Macarthur Wind Farm two years ago, I have been amazed at the lack of regulation and information available to the public. At all levels of government, from local council through to state departments and authorities, whose interest are they looking out for? Big business or us the public. How do I know that the operators are meeting the requirements for noise levels. My sleep pattern has been greatly affected already, so I am afraid what it will be like when all the turbines are turning. I would welcome publication on the internet of information relating to the wind farm.

I feel there needs to be independent health studies into rural wind farms, focusing on excessive noise. Before more of these industrial eyesores are erected onto some of our country's prime agricultural land. Which in turn will drive hard working farming families off their farms to save their health.

However until that happens, I fully support the Renewable Energy (Electricity) Amendment (Excessive Noise from Wind Farms) Bill 2012. Hopefully with this Bill, it will give us protection from excessive noise and our right to a good nights sleep in our own beds.