

fracking inquiry

From: Phil O'Brien <campaigns@good.do>
Sent: Sunday, 18 February 2018 3:51 PM
To: fracking inquiry
Cc: Chief Minister; Minister Fyles; Minister Vowles; Minister Moss
Subject: A message from Phil O'Brien

To the Chief Minister, Justice Pepper and Panel,

My name is Phil O'Brien and I'm part of a family that has been part of the Territory from the early pioneering days, mainly to do with Cattle and Droving in Central Australia, the construction of the original Railway through to the Alice in the 1920's, as well as Politics and Health, and a multitude of other contributions to the NT's development. I myself have been lucky enough over the years to have worked in the Cattle and Fishing Industry as well as Tourism, I've spent a lot of years also in Arnhem Land working with the Yolngu People on various projects. I've written books and performed widely as a musician, won awards, and made a couple of movies, but I'm no big deal, and my bank balance will validate that. I've been following this uneasy debate on fracking nationally, and now locally, and in my travels I see the impact its having across the NT community and I'm very concerned. Historically, the Territory and its resources have been plundered, it's been used abused and

exploited from settlement onwards. We have a serious invasive pests and weeds problem, a massive feral animal problem, a merciless Cane Toad problem, and serious pollution from mining, among many other challenging environmental situations. With all the best intentions and under the banner of Economic Development, our flora and fauna won't ever be the same again. The On shore Gas Industry is in the wrong place at the wrong time. Of course, we need development, of course we need growth and jobs, but is the grab for On Shore gas the answer? Apart from the totally uncertain environmental risks that everyone is now familiar with, it's very invasive and doesn't in any way complement our other main industry's. In fact, it threatens their continued prosperity and growth. The On Shore gas industry is not the right fit for the Territory on many levels, and I think the debate shouldn't have even got this far. The threat of this industry looming over the Territory has unnecessarily polarized our community, has created uncertainty and anxiety in many sectors. I feel as does a great deal of other concerned Territorians that due to the 'holy dollar' the future of this industry is already decided. Even against the flow of community opinion. But while there's still a chance, while there's still time, the Territory can throw the threat of fracking out the window like a rotten fish fillet, and we can move on and find other industries. We just need some innovation, some strong gallant leadership from the Labour Government, and vision. There's so much clean exciting technology around now in regard to power generation, there's great things happening and we can be part of the future. Our unique diverse Territory can forge ahead. Yes, we need jobs and growth but On Shore gas isn't the answer. The mining spin doctors and snake oil salesmen are out there waving the money around, trying to fox their way in, but surely the young fresh Labour government we all voted in with so much optimism, is above this. A referendum on this issue might be one way to move forward, and reinforce the voice of our Territory communities, sending an unequivocal message to the government, and the On Shore gas industry.

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