

From: geralyn mccarron [REDACTED]
Date: 15 October 2017 10:56:24 am ACST
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: more comment.

Dear [REDACTED]
I attach some further comment for the consideration of the task force (which I would like to be treated as a formal submission).
Thank you
Geralyn McCarron.

Dear Justice Pepper,

I wish to bring to the attention of the task force some information unpinning the conclusions of two other jurisdictions (Ireland and Scotland) regarding unconventional gas development.

In Ireland, on 12th April 2017, Hildegarde Naughton, Chairman of The Joint Committee on Communications, Climate Action and Environment in the report on "The prohibition of the exploration and extraction of onshore petroleum bill 2016" wrote:

"Having considered all the evidence offered, while the committee accepts that while there may be economic advantages and enhanced energy security for Ireland in allowing unconventional oil and gas exploration, the committee is of the view that these benefits are outweighed by the risks to the environment and human health from an as yet relatively untried technology.

The committee also feels that further investment in exploitation of fossil fuels would in all likelihood reduce investment in sustainable sources of energy, mindful of Ireland's commitments in relation to climate change mitigation."

http://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_communications_natural_resources_and_agriculture/reports/2017/2017-04-12_report-on-the-prohibition-of-the-exploration-and-extraction-of-onshore-petroleum-bill-2016_en.pdf

On 3rd October 201, in a statement to the Scottish Parliament outlining the government's position on onshore unconventional gas development, Minister for Business, Innovation and Energy Paul Wheelhouse said:

"In reviewing the research findings, I had particular concerns over the insufficiency of epidemiological evidence on health impacts highlighted by Health Protection Scotland.

I also note the conclusion of the Committee on Climate Change, our advisers on statutory targets, who concluded that unconventional oil and gas extraction in Scotland would make meeting our existing climate change targets more challenging.

Indeed, as the Committee states in its report, in order to be compatible with Scottish climate change targets, emissions from production of unconventional oil and gas would require to be offset through reductions in emissions elsewhere in the Scottish economy. Given the scale of the challenge we already face, that would be no easy task.

I also note that KPMG concluded in their report on the economic impact of an unconventional oil and gas industry in Scotland that under their central development scenario, just 0.1% annually would on average be added to Scottish GDP should fracking be given the go-ahead."

and:

“Presiding Officer, while I am sure that an unconventional oil and gas industry would work to the highest environmental, and health and safety standards, it is our responsibility as a Government to make a decision we believe is in the best interests of the people of this country as a whole. We must be confident that the choices we make will not compromise health and safety or damage the environment in which we live.

Having considered this matter in considerable detail, it is also our view that the outcome of our public engagement shows that in those communities which would be most affected, there is no social licence for unconventional oil and gas to be taken forward at this time, and the research we have conducted does not provide a strong enough basis from which to adequately address those communities’ concerns.

Presiding Officer, taking all of this into account and balancing the interests of the environment, our economy, public health and public opinion, I can confirm that the conclusion of the Scottish Government is that we will not support the development of unconventional oil and gas in Scotland.”

<https://news.gov.scot/speeches-and-briefings/unconventional-oil-and-gas-statement>

I hope this is some assistance to the task force in their deliberations.
Best wishes,
Geraldyn McCarron