

Ms Margaret Liveris
Committee Clerk, Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
Legislative Council
Parliament House
GPO Box A11
Perth WA 6837



Without prejudice

12th September 2013

Dear Ms Liveris

I write with reference to the forthcoming parliamentary inquiry into fracking in WA and hope that this letter helps raise the voice of the 'little people' who could potentially be affected by the outcome of this inquiry.

As landowners in the beautiful country town of Gingin WA located on the Moore River, my family and neighbours are most alarmed at the proposed 'fracking' for gas by Empire Oil & Gas under our town.

My wife and I recently enjoyed watching the (new on DVD) Hollywood movie 'Promised Land' (Matt Damon) which tells of the struggles between working class landowners in rural America and big energy corporations. Little did we know that such a similar situation is playing out on our own doorstep!

My brief research has uncovered alarming information that is in the public domain (and has recently gained media attention in Australia based on recent drilling over east) as follows:

A variety of chemicals involved in gas fracking are known to be toxic, causing skin, respiratory, liver kidney and nervous system damage.

These chemicals can affect people through water pollution, of either ground or surface water. Even more worrying, many of these dangerous substances can evaporate from fracking settling ponds, polluting the air that locals and workers breathe.

Long term, low-level exposure to many of these chemicals is linked with a range of diseases. For instance, some affect bone marrow, causing anaemia and cancers such as leukaemia or lung cancer, while others – 'endocrine disruptors' - can affect the growth and development of children, even at very low levels of exposure.

Source: The Clean Water, Healthy Land Alliance (www.cleanwaterhealthyland.org.au)

Aside from potential risks to human health, there are serious questions being raised both locally and internationally about social impacts, groundwater contamination and water security. The risks to our farmland and animals are equally important given their key role in our food supply chain.

I understand that a massive amount of water is used in the process to extract the natural gas during the fracking process – water that is not only at risk of pollution due to the methods undertaken but also that exhausts such a precious and limited resource in this part of the world.

We ask that this inquiry ensures better regulation of this industry. As things stand the regulatory frameworks for gas fracking are inadequate, this needs to be rectified - if only for the sake of our children, as we cannot afford to risk the unknown consequences of the pollutants and contaminants wreaking havoc on our residential areas. Australia is such a resource rich nation there should be no need to go down this road.

Yours sincerely

~~Steve~~ Trafford