

Hon. Simon O'Brien MLC  
Chairman  
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs  
Legislative Council of Western Australia

By email: [council@parliament.wa.gov.au](mailto:council@parliament.wa.gov.au)

cc: Hon. Stephen Dawson MLC

Your Ref: Petition No. 124

Dear Sir,

### **Submission to the Committee**

Thank you for your letter of 24th August 2016. Please note that I have not made a complaint to the Ombudsman, as I was not aware that was the appropriate path to follow. Please consider the following points in your deliberations:

- Public access to Port Hedland harbour has seen a creeping decrease over the past 25 years;
- There is no place for members of the public to board a boat if they have mobility issues;
- I have attended Town meetings and Port Hedland Port Authority meetings to advocate the use of a pontoon jetty for inclusive access to the Harbour;
- In the construction of this exclusive (harbour staff only) jetty the public was subjected to five years of noise from pile driving;
- For the last ten years those fishing or attempting to enjoy time on the jetty were interrupted by industry's commercial use of the space;
- The repairs described in the answer to the Hon. Stephen Dawson's question in Parliament (attached) were not repairs as such just removal of the lower tiers of the old jetty after being destroyed by harbour boats as they interrupted public use;
- Community expectations are that Royalties for Regions funds will be used for public amenities, and are a compensation for the disruption of industry destroying our free use of our town;
- The public were never informed or given input into the use of this money or the jetty being out of bounds to the public;
- Latest statistics show half of aboriginal people have some form of disability. This jetty is in the midst of the Marrapikurinya 'hand pointing down' therefore a significant part of the local indigenous population will be unable to do what they enjoy best - to fish in their harbour;
- It tears a hole in my heart to watch my daughter 10' above the water on the jetty, her dogs terrified to traverse it, while able-bodied harbour staff walk along a jetty she could make perfect use of in her wheelchair;
- Not only is there no social justice in this matter, but it also detrimentally affects the tourist experience of Port Hedland, an important consideration as we try to diversify away from iron ore.

- An easy solution is to move the prohibiting gates half way down the pontoon and have the public use the half nearest the ramp.

I would be grateful if you could consider this carefully and help us to restore public equity. Please do not hesitate to call me on 0437 156 917 if I can provide any further information.

Yours sincerely,

Joan Foley