


Sarah Moles,


North Branch,
Qld 4370

29th March 2016

Dear sir/madam,

I write in support of the proposed amendments to the *Environmental Protection (Chain of Responsibility) Amendment Bill 2016*.

I have lived in Qld since 1987 and have travelled widely within the State. During my travels I became aware of the large number of abandoned mine sites across the State. It took some time before I realised that the much needed clean-up and rehabilitation of these sites would only be done if funded by taxpayers. I understand that there are now more than 10,000 such sites.

I acknowledge the contribution the resources sector has made to the Queensland economy but I note that the mining industry also receives very generous subsidies from the Queensland Government.

The coal price has been falling for many months and analysts believe this is a structural decline not a temporary fall in commodity prices. The price of oil and gas has also fallen markedly leading me to wonder about the financial pressures facing mining and energy resources companies and the risk of them being forced into administration. Further, I understand that insurance is difficult to obtain so if environmental damage was to occur, there could be no cover at all. Taxpayers might be forced to pay yet another bill.

Queensland Nickel's recent woes are an example of the mining industry's poor record of environmental management. The litany of complaints regarding coal seam gas and underground coal gasification provide many more. It is unacceptable for taxpayers to continually foot the bill for environmental damage; and high time that the resources sector be held to account for its actions.

I strongly support the 'user pays' principle – as do governments, when it suits them to do so. Mining and energy resources companies are subsidised to develop our resources and make big profits from their extraction, processing and/or export. They should pay their fair share and not expect another handout to clean up after they have finished.

In my opinion, changes to the *Environmental Protection (Chain of Responsibility) Amendment Bill 2016* are urgently required. The legislation needs to include a responsibility to clean up environmental impacts from all mineral processing facilities in the State. This would ensure our environment is rehabilitated as per the conditions applied to mining developments; and protect Queensland's taxpayers from an unsustainable and unconscionable financial burden.

Yours sincerely

