

Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee

From:
Sent: Thursday, 17 December 2015 7:55 AM
To: Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee
Subject: Re: Qld Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2015

Categories: Submission

Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee of the Qld Parliament

Re : Qld Water Legislation Amendment Bill

Please accept this as my submission regarding the Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 (WLA).

The WLA makes to the Water Reform and Other Legislation Amendment Act (WROLA).
It is important to highlight a crucial amendment to the WROLA Bill which is MISSING from the WLA.
The WLA should revoke Part 4 of WROLA.

Part 4 of WROLA gives the mining industry a statutory right to take underground water and removes current requirement to obtain water licences.

Part 4 of WROLA will harm agricultural water users and the environment because it will:

- i. allow miners to remove massive quantities of groundwater without control or regulation
- ii. prevent Qld Government from acting transparently to prevent unsustainable levels of water extraction by operational miners
- iii. remove the right for affected adjoining landholders to challenge licences even though their water resources will be affected or lost due to the mining operations
- iv. exclude the Land Court as final independent arbiter regarding appeals against water licences granted to coal miners

Failure to revoke Part 4 of WROLA is a very substantial breach of the promises which the Qld Government made in the lead up to the most recent State election, when it promised to 'repeal the Newman Government water laws which will....allow for over allocation of Queensland's precious water resources'.

By removing the right of adjoining landholders to object to the provision of water licences to miners, preserving Part 4 of WROLA also breaches Qld ALP promises to restore community objection rights against mining.

Recommendations

I implore that the WLA is not passed unless it is suitably amended to revoke Part 4 of WROLA, and thus to prevent the granting of statutory water rights to the mining industry.

I generally support the WLA, noting that the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development should extend to apply to the resources sector under Chapter 3 of the Water Act.

With many thanks for your further consideration of this matter.

Yours sincerely

Dr Maura Harvey