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Select Committee into Certain Aspects of Queensland Government Administration
PO Box 610
Parliament House ACT 2600

Dear Committee Members,

Please accept this as a submission to the "Select Committee on Certain Aspects of Queensland Government Administration related to Commonwealth Government Affairs".

I would like to advise the Committee about the failures of the Queensland Government to properly control or regulate coal and unconventional gas mining and associated infrastructure in Queensland, and the negative impacts that is having on people, communities and the environment.

In particular, I would like to draw your attention to the following:

1. I have found it extremely difficult to deal with the coal seam gas companies, as the process established by the Queensland Government appears to be very one sided. For instance:
 - a) I found that all contract negotiations were very intimidating, threatening and deceitful and "they" meaning the Gas company uses fear as part of their negotiations:
 - i. Threatening with a section 805; a \$50,000 fine
 - ii. Two lands officers always come out to talk to you
 - iii. threatening lands court stating that they can obtain permission anyway, and the in meantime starting drilling
 - iv. I had no information as to what my rights were.
 - v. All the lawyers who could provide assistance would only provide advice in direct relation to the contract, not government ACT or legislations.
 - vi. I could not find a lawyer in my area that was not doing work for the gas companies, had investments in the gas companies, or even sat on the boards of directors.
 - vii. Other landowners who sought legal advice ended up with huge legal bills that were not covered by the CSG companies.
 - viii. I was told that I had to sign the contract as I could not refuse; all QGC would do was go to land court and get what they wanted from there as they have full support of QLD government.

- ix. The company changes land access officers on a regular basic, so any concerns you have get lost or are not handed over to the next officer, as nothing is written.
 - x. Creating problems with ex-husband
 - xi. I was told that only one test well would be on the property and that there would no other gas infrastructure.
2. QGC make verbal promises, make reassurances and never put anything in writing. It is always “we will meet you at the front gate to discuss this matter, make agreements, “they”will take care off all your concerns and “they” never put into writing” so that I have nothing to go back too.
 3. QGC lands officers assured me that QGC would work with my family and I to ensure everything would work out and they would support me (yet my family is living rough with no home for our children).
 4. As a land owner during contract negotiations, and trying to voice our concerns/fears, the following are some of the issues that I had:
 - a) we were shown a map of where their next test well was going to be placed, which was very close to our dam. The dam was used to provide stock and domestic water.
 - b) the land officers explained that the legislation and regulations used to specify a distance of 200 metres away from water supply but the government had allowed the changes so that only 100 metres separation was needed. This distance has now been changed to 50 metres.
 - c) The property next to mine has a evaporation pond on it that was put in 2008 without a liner. It flooded in 2011, with all the overflow water traversing my property into our dam. After bathing, the children had a red rash over their bodies. I contacted the local government Gas field commission and they recommended contacting QGC directly and that they would be able to test my dam water. QGC came out and tested the dam water. I also asked QGC if they would put in a place a solution to fix this problem using a “make good agreement” similar to that used in case of water bores, as the dam is our water source for bathing and veggie garden. To date, I still do not have the results of these tests.
 - d) We were told that our property was on the “buyout” list;
 - e) With the new “trunk line” on southern edge (back boundary), I was concerned for the children’s safety and asked for fencing along the trunk-line. I was told that fencing could not be done for us.
 - f) QGC lands officers said that the government believes that the compensation monies giving is fair and just and should cover all extra costs.

5. After you have been swindled in to the belief that you have no choice and that they are ethical, honest company “they” are going to do right by your family the problems start and you spend hours a day trying to sort out issues that arise from this company on your property and in your local area. The compensation monies do not cover all the extra time and effort involved. These are some examples of issues I had:
- a) Compensations monies not paid on time and into wrong bank account.
 - b) You lodge a complaint or phone with an issue, and you get a new lands officer or some else comes to see you.
 - c) You spend hours on the phone/ emailing to try and work issues out.
 - d) Driving long distances to sort out issues.
 - e) The initial QGC land access agreement was for them to provide 24 hours notice. Due to their lack of adherence to this, the notice required was increased to 48 hours. As they could not even do this, we increased it to 72 hours which could be done by email. We also asked for a sign in/out book to be placed on the entrance gate. 55 people that did bother to sign and entered our property/work site within a 3 month period. There were many more who entered but did not bother to stop and sign in. Two workers signed in, not out, and as we have never found a vehicle or bodies, I presume they have left the property. I was never given 72 hours notice 55 times. Many workers would just drive around gates instead of getting out of their vehicle and opening/closing them. Fences were even cut by contractors and workers to gain access.
 - f) While QGC were working on the trunk line, another problem arose. The contractors were not washing down their vehicles and were not carrying a certified weed inspection report prior to entry, as was agreed upon in our land access agreement. Our neighbour now has mother-of-millions on their place from a bulldozer from QGC. QGC and their contractors were driving on their place and then entering our property. We asked all vehicles to show their weed control certificate; they were unable to do so. I contacted DPI and they stated that weed control is the land owners responsibility. The annual compensation does not cover the extra costs of the increased weed control requirements.
 - g) Safety of children was not a concern until QGC created a security risk of their own on the trunk line with no gates or fencing being installed. QGC had left a road all the way to Bentley Park (approximately 10km) and people were accessing the trunk line and driving all over the place. We have people running around in camouflage clothing and night vision goggles at night, with security guards driving all over the place from Murray Pipe and Civil and QGC trying to find them.
 - h) Semi-trailers were regularly turning around in the back yard right next to the children’s play area.

- i) Also while the work on the trunk line continued, the children continued to go for walks on our property. On one such occasion, a worker told the children to “fuck off and stay away from their work site”. This is the kids back yard not QGC work site my children have a right to play in there back yard this is why I asked QGC to put up a fence whist they were working on the trunk line - they will do kilometres of fencing for some people, but not others.
 - j) I also asked for contractors working on our property to have “blue cards” which allowed them to be in the vicinity of our children as well as the foster children we took care of.
 - k) During contract negotiations, I was told that all of the trunk line was going to be underground, and that there would be nothing above ground, and that we would be able to farm over top of the line. QGC have two great big air vent sticking out of the ground at each end of my property. I tell QGC what if one of the children are riding their motor bike they could hit them and it would injure them. The QGC solution is to put great big rounds of concrete around them so now if the kids hit it, they will kill them. I have advised QGC in writing that the air vents were not part of the original contract. They have sent me a amended contract to sign offering \$600 dollars each compensation, to which I have refused. This still has not been finalised. Tony Heidrich contacts me and stated “do not worry Kylie about any one else we need to worry about you and your family I will see what QGC can do for your family and ring you in two days time.” He never contacts me back.
 - l) Large amounts of rubbish were left on our property after the work on the line was completed. When we contacted QGC they stated that we could clean it all up and then invoice them for it. They had created the problem and it was their responsibility to clean it up as part of the rehabilitation agreement.
6. I get to such a stage of distress that I sent QGC a notice that they were in breach of contract.
- a) I locked my gate due to dispute over contracts, QGC would continually harass me via telephone calls and emails.
 - b) QGC contact my ex-husband’s lawyer. The lawyer states if I don’t let QGC onto the property they are going to file in family court.
 - c) QGC try bribing us with \$10,000 if we unlock the gate .
 - d) QGC offer to fence our house yard

QGC did not follow the contract in this case I gave QGC written notice of my concerns and my problem QGC made promises but did not follow the standards conduct and compensation Agreement In section 18 dispute resolution:18.5 of mediation:

The parties may appoint a mutually agreed mediator to mediate the Dispute in accordance with Australian Institute of mediation Rules, and in absence of agreement either party may apply to the Queensland president of the Australian Institute of Arbitrators and mediators for the appointment of a mediator.

1. The impact from mining and gas exploration in surrounding areas on my property and have been devastating with a lot of problems:
 - a) Rubbish on road sides. I was driving home and a Murray pipe and civil 4x4 put our in front of me and through his lunch rapper and popper straight out the window it landed on my car I call QGC and they sent me a email stated that they would look into it and sorry, the rubbish on the side of the road is a disgrace.
 - b) Traffic volume. The number of utes on the road one after the other and they leave the orange light on lights on no one home the workers do no have bush road manners of dip your lights off high beam.
 - c) Speed and driving to the road conditions. The truck drivers do not slow down they drivers of QGC or their contracted do not move off the road on one lane bush roads. The government has not widen the bush roads to accommodate the amount of traffic on them the police have no more officer to police the roads and the speeding and traffic offences.
 - d) Noise. No we were not told prior to commence that the government has allowed drilling 24hours a day I phoned to make a complaint about noise there was a high pitch noise and one of our foster children has autism and the noise was upsetting him greatly he didn't stop streaming the noise started at 5am that morning I called the local council the department of mines the gas commission board the gas company in our area by this time it is 11pm at 4am the next morning the noise is still going the drilling rig was 6km away from us and yet this noise everyday night this noise became part of our life the government legislation on noise in our area IS DRILLING ONLY IF SOME ONE COMPLAINTS DO THEY SHUT DOWN which they do not shut down it cost to much money to shut down. From 6am to 6pm seven days a week, generators. Water trucks,machinery trucks, bulldozers and workers, utes.
 - e) Light pollution. We can not see stars in our area now since gas moved in just a stream of bright lights from men's accommodation and water treatment plant and the flares.
 - f) Water quality. Water in the weir was never test prior to CSG activities this water flows right through our country's whole water system through to the Murray and all our farm land survive on this water a system so great for every Australian.
 - g) Community impact. We were told this is good for our community as it would give people work I had a 600 men's accommodation unit Murray Pipe and

Civil and a 600 men Origin energy on the other side behind me these men are not local people but people from everywhere else and overseas people

- h) Visual pollution. Water treatment plant, gas well after gas well
- i) Health issues. QGC also sprayed all of the dirt roads in my area with non-treated well water then later this legislation was changed. What was in the water for the government to change this? No impact study has been given to me in relation to this.
- j) Safety issues. One of the wells was whistling its head off and people started calling government officers and the gas companies. The gas companies only had technical personnel capable of fixing the problem over 80 kilometres away in Miles. Some extra questions were then asked of QGC: what happens if a well does blow? what is the safety protocol for residents in the area. QGC's response: "None. People in the affected area are just collateral damage."

Dealing with government ministers, local members of parliament and government departments and other bodies has also been very hard and they have shown very little empathy for my situation and what is happening the area. This is demonstrated by:

1. The answers I get from QGC "... is that the government allowed us to do this. Go and talk with them."
2. The answers I get from the government is get legal advice which I can not afford. I believe this is the government responsibility that I am homeless due to their legislation that allowed these companies to be in my local area.
3. Land values in the area have gone down to the stage that they are un-sellable due to the infrastructure of coal steam Gas companies " who would want to live in as Gas field?".
4. Due to the Gas companies failures of compliance with there own contracts with me, my family is now homeless, and have no money to replace what I had. The government has failed to enforce QGC company to honour their contracts and to follow government acts and regulations.
5. QGC did not follow the standards conduct and compensation Under section 14. Indemnity QGC has not followed in accordance with the contracted 14.5 where clause 14.2(c) (applies whether the loss involves damage to the Property that is capable of repair and,if so the manner in which time and the time by which the landholder acting reasonably requests the repair be made.)the Tenement holder must at election of the landholder acting reasonably do all or any of these things: (A) repair the damage to the Property to the reasonably satisfaction of the landholder (B) replace the property: (c) reimburse the landholder for the loss.
6. I contact my local member Howard Hobbs office and ask if they can help me with paper work and what to do as I do not understand the system and I am not good at writing letters Janice Colley from Electorate Officer for Howard Hobbs MP PO

Box 945 Roma Q 4455. I am told over the phone that “I need to harden up” and she sends me an email stating she will try to contact Scott Little.

7. Hon Andrew Cripps MP Minister for Natural Resources and Mines sends me a letter which is attached with this submission, But he basically states that it is between me and QGC and to contact Scott Little.
8. I have contacted Mr Scott Little CSG Compliance Unit Department of Natural Resources and Mine I have talked to him over the phone and told him my problem. He said he would contact QGC and get their side of the story and get back to me. I am still waiting to be contacted.
9. On several occasions I have called the prime ministers office who forwarded my call to their environment personnel. After explaining my situation, he stated that he would call me back. He never has. On other times I called that office, my calls have been forwarded to the law society for me to obtain legal advice
10. On another occasion, the prime ministers office put me through to Fay, a very nice lady, who is a councillor for human services. She tells me my problem is a government one and to not give up and to run this marathon.
11. Ray Brown, our local council mayor does not care. He is the chairman of the Gas Field Commission, and is busy angling his way into parliament.
12. In article I read from QHealth it stated that as a community we are only upset that our lifestyle was taken away from us and yet people in the area have leukaemia , water on the brain, children with epilepsy, and mental health issues. My daughter was at Tara swimming pool and had a seizure. I took her to Tara doctors. She went to be tested for epilepsy. I did not get the results but since moving to Texas, she has not had another fit.
13. The children would get headaches and blood noses living in Kenya area. Again since moving they have not had these problems.
14. Over the last ten years I have learned that there is no support for women living in the bush for domestic violence , from police failing in respond to phone calls to no court support, no counselling and no legal advice; Legal aid Toowoomba not even Rural Women’s services they are unable to assist me yet we are led to believe that there is plenty of support for Woman. There is no housing for women in the bush and with large families when fleeing a domestic situations. The organisation that received these government funded have not assisted me in anyway after numerous phone calls. Even on one occasion, I had to flee QLD to NSW to obtain a DVO.
15. QGC lands officers stated that the QLD government had agreed that the compensation monies we were to received was a fair deal and that there were to be no negotiations on this \$1,500 a year and a one off payment of \$1,000. QGC put in access road for them to access their well. But the compensation level does not cover the extra costs for weed control, constant phone calls, monitoring contractor activities, the noise pollution, the light pollution, the visual pollution and all the other myriad of problems created by the coal seam gas activities.

16. The government receives a lot of money for mining tenements and exploration permits. Where is all this money? What is this money spent on?

Queensland Government Department of mines and energy THE RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF HOLDERS, OWNERS AND OCCUPIERS RELATING TO THE ENTRY OF LANDS UNDER A PETROLEUM AUTHORITY Petroleum and Gas (production and safety)ACT 2004 – section 499 Petroleum ACT 1923 – section 780 FROM number PA-23AA version number 1 that QGC land officer gave me with the trunk line contract Section 531 (5) of the Petroleum and Gas (Production and safety)Act2004 and section 79P(5) of the Petroleum ACT 1923 3.4 compensable Effect. Compensable effect means all or any of the following in relation to the relevant owner or occupier's land. (a) deprivation of possession of its surface, (b) diminution of its value,(c) diminution of its use made,or that may be made, of the land or any improvement on it(d) severance of any part of the land from other parts of the land or from other land that the eligible claimant owns,(e) any cost or loss arising from the carrying out of activities under the petroleum authority on the land.

There have been many negative impacts on my business, livelihood and family, some examples that I have personal knowledge of are:

1. We were looking at setting up a commercial aquaponics for growing tomatoes and lettuces but were very concerned about the water quality and the continuing used of and release of chemical and minerals that were bad for human health. Even though our dam was tested by QGC, I still do not have the results.
2. The local shops in town are closing down. The lady who owned and operated the local Laundromat has closed as all the accommodation sheets, towels are trucked through to Toowoomba.
3. The local tyre place does not fix the tyres. The local butcher does not supply meat to the accommodation. The fruit and veg shop which was run by an young local family that used to even go up to the nursing home shuts down.
4. The town itself has changed from a nice county town everyone know everyone to now having Wool worth's, McDonald, KFC and \$800 a week rent and the cost of a house and land package \$500k every day workers Locals can not afford these rents. Elders that have lived in the area all their lives can not afford a unit in their community The government affordability housing project that was plan to go ahead has been cancelled.
5. The hours of the family support centre have been reduced to a few half days a week with very little government funding,
6. There has been no infrastructure by the government to accommodate more people in our area the ambulance service has not more ambulances or workers for emergencies our hospital has not been upgraded or more nursing staff put on the maternity ward got closed down in town
7. The Chinchilla school is busting out of it steams with over 500 students - no new school

8. The children of Chinchilla were meant to get a sports centre with new gymnasium – still not there
9. Our road, Wieambilla Road, a dirt road, has so many truck on it cutting though to the wells and work sights that our car tyres were getting replaced on a regular basis we complained to the council they stated that our road is a water way not a road ring QGC they will fix it call QGC they stated we give the council money for the roads they use the council must fix it.
10. There are no extra police to deal with all the extra issues. For instance, my partner was rear-ended by a QGC contracted garbage truck. The car was a write-off. To date, no police report into the accident has been completed, which means that we are unable to access the contractors insurance to obtain compensation and replacement vehicle. Even no help has been obtained by contacting the local member of parliament - they do not care.
11. Also no extra nursing or ambulance paramedic staff to assist with growing numbers and issues in the community.
12. Queensland Health closed down the midwifery/maternity ward section of the hospital and also the outpatient doctor free to see clinic.
13. The Chinchilla doctor now charges \$98 to see people at the doctor's surgery.
14. A lot of people that moved into my community moved out for fresh air and so kids could run and play outside there was never any baseline air testing done. When the wind blows there are odours in the air, children with blood noses and headaches.
15. I can not justify going to work now for what purpose everything I have worked for the last 20 years is gone everything I planed to leave my children is gone
16. My foster children had to be displaced to other foster families I have no idea how they are going.
17. We have no community no home no work and no one cares that this has been allowed to happen to us.
18. We are gas field refugees when we lived there I felt like a prisoner with no rights
19. As stated in QGC culture and Principles relating to society:
 - a) We work to ensure that neighbouring communities benefit from our presence on an enduring basis
 - b) We listen to neighbouring communities and take account of their interests
 - c) We support human rights within our areas of influence.

Conclusion

Government responsibility the government allowed coal steam gas into my area and passed legislation that gave a company the rights over the people in the community gave

the company rights over the land and water we as the people of Australia are afforded human rights this has not taken place in these circumstances THE AUSTRALIAN CONSTITUTIONAL It may be helpful at this stage to clarify what we mean when we talk about human rights. At their most basic, human rights are designed to ensure that each person can to live with dignity; free from fear, persecution and violence; productively; and harmoniously alongside others. As the understanding of human rights has developed, within countries and under inter- national law, they are often conceptualised in several categories. Civil and political rights provide a framework within which people can participate as equals in a democratic community, subject to the rule of law. They include, for example, the right 117 FUTURE JUSTICE FutureJustice-FinalText.x:FutureJustice-FinalText.x 18/2/10 11:11 AM Page 117

CHERYL SAUNDERS 118 FUTURE JUSTICE to vote, freedom of speech and protest, personal liberty, the right to property and various guarantees of fair treatment, both generally and under the criminal law. Many of these rights require restraint on the part of governments in exercising the authority of the state. A second category of rights comprises economic, social and cultural rights: to housing, to education, to health care, to employment, to live in accordance with your own customs and traditions. Many of these rights require positive action on the part of governments in managing the resources of the state.

A third category of rights, which are likely to become increasingly important, concern the environment. These require positive action on the part of the state as well.

Commitment to fair treatment Human rights are inherent, inalienable, indivisible and universal. They are the birthright of all people and cannot be lost or taken away. They are all of equal importance and apply to all people whatever their race, gender, disability, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, age, property or other status. Observance of human rights, in Australia and abroad, benefits the security and prosperity of all nations and individuals. Successive Australian governments have supported these principles and systems. Promoting a strong, free democracy Australia's federal structure, independent judiciary, robust representative parliamentary institutions and independent national human rights institution (the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission) play an integral role in protecting human rights. They also provide a bulwark against abuses of power and denials of fundamental freedoms.

The Australian Government encourages people to learn about and participate in Australia's democratic institutions. Key democratic principles and practices include responsible government; the separation of legislative, executive and judicial powers; the observance of constitutional safeguards; the rule of law; a transparent criminal justice system; equitably resourced and respected opposition parties; and a free media. Australia's strong democratic institutions are complemented by a number of specific legal protections for human rights. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade R.G. Casey Building John McEwen Crescent Barton ACT 0221 Australia Phone: +61 2 6261 1111 Fax: +61 2 6261 3111 ABN: 47 065 634 525

Thank you for this opportunity to make a submission, I hope I have given you an insight

of the problem that people living in Gas fields have endured and continue to face everyday.