



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

TONY WINDSOR MP
INDEPENDENT
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR NEW ENGLAND

Shop 5
259 Peel Street
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

All Mail: PO Box 963
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

Ph: (02) 6761 3080

Toll Free: 1300 301 839

Fax: (02) 6761 3380

e-mail: Tony.Windsor.MP@aph.gov.au

Web Page: www.tonywindsor.com.au

MEDIA RELEASE

3 June 2008

Windsor and Draper support Caroona Coal Action Group

A recent leaked report into the impact of long wall mining reinforces concerns held by many on the Liverpool Plains that the planning process in NSW does not adequately cover the many issues arising from this method of mining on a floodplain underlain with interlinked groundwater systems according to the Federal and State Members for the area Tony Windsor and Peter Draper.

They believe that the report highlights the need for a full independent catchment-wide study of the offsite impacts of such mining and are supporting the Caroona Coal Action Group in their efforts to have one done.

Mr Windsor said he would be relaying the leaked document to the Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator the Hon Penny Wong for her consideration in her decision-making process regarding funding for such an independent study.

“The leaked report indicates that the existing state-based planning processes would not adequately guard against onsite and offsite impacts of mining.

This information confirms the need for an independent study not just in the area of exploration but further down the valley to look at the interconnectivity of the aquifers and what happens if you cut the “artery” at the headwaters.

If the groundwater artery is cut, unlike arteries in the human body, you won't be able to reconnect it and let it heal itself.

It will be destroyed forever and along with it, the productivity of a very valuable ongoing agricultural asset,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor said he understood why some landholders were still denying access for exploratory drilling to take place on their properties.

“It is time BHP stopped some of their heavy handed tactics to “explore” country they know very well they will never be able to mine.

“BHP should not be using the so-called exploration licence from the NSW Government as a licence to drill holes in sensitive areas where groundwater reserves and the normal land-slump or subsidence that occurs with long wall mining would prevent any mining irrespective of the existence of coal,” Mr Windsor said.

Member for Tamworth Peter Draper is also backing the Caroona Coal Action Group.

“Unfortunately, it seems clear that the NSW Government are putting BHP's economic well being ahead of the very valid ecological concerns regarding water resources expressed by the Caroona Coal Action Group, so a detailed study of water would be a sensible move,” Mr Draper said.

For further information contact Tony Windsor, Ph (02) 6761 3080 or 0427 66 8868