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21 February, 2012

The Hon. Julia Gillard, MP
Prime Minister of Australia
Parliament House
Canberra, ACT 2600

Medical Director

Dr. Sarah Laurie, BMBS (Flinders)

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The Hon. Dr. Michael Wooldridge,
B.Sc. MBMS, MBA

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing to you to ensure that you are personally made aware of the growing number of “wind farm refugees” in Australia, who are abandoning their homes after advice from their treating doctor. There is also a growing number of sick, vulnerable Australians who are unable to leave their homes near wind developments, and who are trapped in homes which are making them seriously ill. These include frail elderly citizens, people living with disabilities and young children. Those with the financial resources to do so move away. Those without those financial resources have few choices; either stay trapped in a home where their symptoms continue to worsen, rely on the charity of friends and relations, or become homeless.

This situation is occurring as a direct result of your government’s current policies. It is also occurring because state government planning laws are inadequate, and there is no effective mechanism currently to monitor and deal with the acoustic pollution these wind turbines are emitting. It is also occurring because not one health department in Australia is taking any notice of the cries for help from these citizens. They all refer to the NHMRC’s Rapid Review, and say “there is no evidence you could possibly be getting sick”, and refuse to investigate, often denigrating the victims in the process.

As a direct consequence of all these systemic failings, the health of Australian rural citizens is being seriously harmed, and they are being ignored.

This situation is entirely preventable, by siting wind turbines well away from homes and workplaces.

To determine what is a “safe distance” requires acoustic and medical research. This research was recommended in the report from the Senate Inquiry into Rural Wind Farms, tabled in Parliament on 24th June 2011.

Your government has done nothing to implement those investigations in the following 8 months. In that time, many more rural residents have become ill, and some have had to abandon their homes. A number of them have written to you personally, and I understand from them that they are yet to receive any acknowledgement from you or your office, let alone some action.

I note that government Senators chose not to support a motion on 8th February, 2012 to “immediately implement” those same Senate Inquiry recommendations. This same motion was, however, supported by the Greens, the Coalition, and independent and DLP senators.

Why did the Government Senators choose not to recommend research to help solve this problem, which is resulting directly in serious harm to the health of rural Australian families, directly caused by your government’s current policies?

The current CEO of the NHMRC, Professor Warwick Anderson made it clear there was a concern, in his oral evidence to the Senate Inquiry, on 31st March 2011. He stated “we do not say that there are no ill effects”, and acknowledged that there was very little existing evidence, and that the absence of evidence did not mean there was not a problem.

Why the inaction, when families are being forced from their homes, or elderly pensioners are left to “rot”?

The following is known:

1. Wind turbines emit infrasound (0-20Hz), low frequency sound (20-200Hz) and audible sound.
2. All three forms of sound energy can cause serious illnesses if the sound pressure levels are high enough, or if the exposure is chronic, particularly if it also results in disturbed sleep. Those illnesses are being observed in rural residents exposed to operating wind turbines.
3. A recent small acoustic study from Falmouth¹ has confirmed that infrasound and low frequency sound directly correlates with symptoms being experienced. This data is the only publicly available data of acoustic emissions measured inside the homes of affected people.
4. Severely disturbed sleep is being reported by many residents, at current wind developments across Australia, at distances out to at least 10km.
5. There is an abundance of published peer reviewed medical research, which demonstrates how damaging chronic severe sleep deprivation is for health, no matter what the cause.
6. The low frequency proportion of sound energy emitted from wind turbines increases with increasing turbine size and power generating capacity². Their detrimental effects have been experienced at Waterloo in South Australia, where residents up to 4.5km away from the nearest wind turbine (3MW Vestas) have been driven from their homes and farms.
7. Larger 3MW+ wind turbines are currently being built and proposed across rural Australia.
8. The symptoms of “wind turbine syndrome” have been known to acousticians for years to occur in conjunction with low frequency sound. This was publicly admitted by Professor Geoffrey Leventhall, at the NHMRC’s workshop on 7th June 2011 in Canberra. He was the coauthor of a literature review on the

effects of low frequency noise with Drs Benton & Pellar listing those symptoms in 2003³, and had himself conducted some of the relevant research, subsequently published in peer reviewed journals.

9. Dr David Iser, a rural General Practitioner from Toora in Victoria, was the first Australian Medical Practitioner to publicise his concerns about “wind turbine syndrome” in **2004**. These concerns were brought to the attention of the then Bracks Government in Victoria, but were ignored, as they have been by every government since. Most of the sick residents left, or were bought out by the developer, in exchange for their silence.
10. Confidentiality clauses prohibiting sick rural residents from speaking out about their health problems have been used by wind developers in Australia and internationally, keeping this adverse health problem out of the public gaze until recently.

Prime Minister, this is a completely unacceptable situation.

Please help to end it immediately by urgently passing the motion to immediately implement the Senate recommendations in the lower house, and ensure truly independent objective acoustic and clinical researchers investigate immediately, **free from wind industry influence**.

To continue turbine construction closer than 10km to homes and workplaces in the interim will inevitably harm human health, based on current knowledge. **Please ensure there is an immediate moratorium on further construction of wind turbines within 10km of homes and workplaces until this research is done.**

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Sarah Laurie, Medical Director

Attachments:

Waubra Foundation Explicit Cautionary Notice

Waubra Foundation DVD (<http://www.youtube.com/user/WaubraFoundation>)

1. <http://www.wind-watch.org/documents/bruce-mcpherson-infrasound-and-low-frequency-noise-study/>
2. <http://www.wind-watch.org/docviewer.php?doc=Moller-Pedersen-Low-frequence-noise-large-wind-turbines.pdf>
3. <http://archive.defra.gov.uk/environment/quality/noise/research/lowfrequency/>