



TIPS FOR WRITING TO POLITICIANS

Writing to a politician and simply expressing your concerns will generally only result in a “your concerns have been noted” reply, if you even receive a reply. It is therefore essential that you ask questions in your letter and ask for an urgent response suggesting a date by which you expect a reply.

Remember the following:

- Be polite;
- Tell the Minister you are a Member of PAGE or a Friend of PAGE – you want the Minister to know that it’s not just you voicing your concerns – there are many like-minded people who stand with you;
- Be brief – no more than a page, if possible;
- Clearly state your concerns as background to your question – tell the Minister if you are upset, distraught, furious – but try to keep highly emotional language to a minimum;
- Ask as many questions as you wish. If the Minister ignores some of your questions write back and ask for answers! You are a tax payer and you are entitled to receive clear responses to all your questions.
- It is very important that we get support from Shadow Ministers, as they will be able to put pressure on Ministers on our behalf and they tend to be far more effective than ‘normal people’. If you receive a ‘brush off’ reply, don’t forget to write to the relevant Shadow Minister to ask for their support. We are fortunate therefore to have David Gibson, MP for Gympie, as Shadow Minister for Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation This is a very important pressure tactic for Government Ministers. You may also contact Peter Wellington, Member for Nicklin, who has also volunteered to pursue responses for anyone who does not receive a satisfactory response from a Minister over a Powerlink issue.
- It is also important to get support from Local Government as well as State Government representatives, so also write to your local Councillor as well as relevant Ministers;
- Refer to the questions below for a guide to get you started. Think about what is particularly concerning *you* and write questions in your own words. If everyone writes exactly the same questions we will all get exactly the same standard replies;
- If you would like help in phrasing your letter, PAGE is very happy to help you. We would also be very interested in hearing about any responses you receive. You can contact us at contact@saveeumundi.org. To obtain the name, responsibilities and contact details of each Minister and Shadow Minister go to: www.parliament.qld.gov.au/members.

Below are some issues that you may have concerns over and questions about:

Health

Recent studies suggest that living close to the electro-magnetic fields emanating from high voltage power lines increases the risk of cancer. One study released in 2007 suggests this could result in a five times greater chance of developing cancer and related health issues - “those who had lived [within 300 m of a power line] aged 0–5 years had a fivefold increase in risk.” Even so, Powerlink still propose to site powerlines within 300m of people’s houses.

You might therefore reasonably ask questions such as:

- To what extent has Powerlink taken into account the recent studies suggesting that high voltage powerlines may be linked with high incidents of cancer when deciding to place its power pylons among the houses of Eerwah Vale, Belli Park and Ridgewood?
- Despite Powerlink’s attempts to dismiss the dangers of high voltage powerlines as comparable to those of household appliances, in 2007 universities in Australia and around the world have identified increases in the diagnosis of cancer among people who live close to high voltage powerlines. Where are the studies undertaken by eminent institutions from around the world that highlight spikes in cancer from people drying their hair or sleeping on electric blankets?

- Tobacco companies maintained for many years that their product did not cause cancer, despite evidence suggesting it did. The companies were wrong. Asbestos companies maintained for many years that their product did not cause cancer, despite evidence suggesting it did. The companies were wrong. Are you, Minister, fully convinced that Powerlink is correct in its assertion that there is little or no danger from electro-magnetic fields? If so, on what grounds and why do you dismiss recent Australian and international studies undertaken suggesting there is a link?

More information can be found at <http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/330/7503/1290>

Scenic Beauty / Land Values / Tourism

Both the South East Queensland Regional Plan and the Maroochy 2000 Plan recognize the area around Eumundi as an area of outstanding natural beauty. The State Government has gone so far as to designate the Eumundi-Kenilworth Road as an official Tourist Drive 22 in recognition of the area's beauty. In September 2007 the Department of Infrastructure released *Scenic Amenity Guidelines* for developers when working in areas of outstanding natural beauty, and yet Powerlink plans to run its pylons (30 m– 65m high) parallel with Tourist Drive 22 through Eerwah Vale, and on through Belli Park and Ridgewood ruining the view from route 22.

You might therefore reasonably ask questions such as:

- **Minister for Infrastructure & Planning**
Are you, as the Minister for Infrastructure & Planning, committed to supporting your Department's *Scenic Amenity Guidelines*, released in September 2007? How do you see how the development of high voltage transmission lines with up to 65 metre tall power pylons, running parallel to tourist route 22 supports your Department's Scenic Amenity Guidelines? If you are committed to sympathetic infrastructure development, what action will you take to ensure this occurs in Eerwah Vale, Belli Park and Ridgewood so the area is not visually blighted forever?
- **Minister for Tourism**
Are you aware of Powerlink's plans to develop transmission lines and substation that will spoil a beautiful part of the countryside with 8-10km of upto 65m tall power pylons through Ridgewood, Belli Park and Eerwah Vale? The Eumundi-Kenilworth Road has been officially designated as Tourist Drive 22 and yet the power pylon corridor will run parallel with this road, visually blighting it enormously. What action will you take to persuade Powerlink to move its power line corridor to a less populated area, and one not visited by thousands of tourists?
- **Minister for Regional Development**
The community of the Sunshine Coast is concerned that the visual blighting of Ridgewood, Belli Park and Eerwah Vale will devastate real estate values in the power pylon corridor and have a flow-on effect to surrounding land values. Do you share our concerns over Powerlink's plans to destroy an area of outstanding natural beauty? If not, why? If you have reached the same conclusion as the residents of the Sunshine Coast – that ruining the beauty of the area will adversely impact on land values – what action will you take to persuade Powerlink to move its power line corridor to a less populated area?

Renewable Energy

Now that a Federal Labor Government has been elected, a 20% mandatory renewable energy target by 2020 will be implemented nation-wide. This means that Energex et al will be required to meet 20% of the energy supplied from renewable sources, such as wind, wave, solar, geothermal etc.

You might therefore reasonably ask questions such as:

Minister for Mines & Energy

- Now that a Federal Labor Government has been elected, a 20% mandatory renewable energy target by 2020 will be implemented nation-wide. How does the Queensland Govt's construction of infrastructure for fossil fuel based power reconcile with your need to provide 20% renewable energy to customers?
- Renewable energy tends to be smaller and less centralised. Given that it will become a larger part of the overall supply, how is developing a large centralised transmission network going to be integrated with renewable energy supply?
- How will the Queensland Government ensure that investments in infrastructure provide the least cost outcome for the community and doesn't result in stranded infrastructure, given the high level of uncertainty surrounding the future price of energy due to new carbon pricing system and the renewable energy targets outlined in the Federal Labor Party's environmental policy?

Addresses of Politicians to Write To

State Government – Local MP's

Mr Peter Wellington MP

Member for Nicklin
PO Box 265,
Nambour
Qld 4560
e. Nicklin@parliament.qld.gov.au

Ms Fiona Simpson MP

Member for Maroochydore
Suite 1, Corner First and Memorial Aves
Maroochydore
QLD 4558

Mr David Gibson MP

Member for Gympie
PO Box 1277
Gympie
Qld 4570

Mr Glen Elmes MP

Member for Noosa
PO Box 155
Noosaville
Qld 4566

State Government – Ministers

The Honourable Anna Bligh MP

Premier of Queensland
Suite 1/90 Vulture Street
West End
Qld 4101
e. southbrisbane@queenslandlaborteam.com

The Honourable Geoff Wilson MP

Minister for Mines and Energy
PO Box 114
Arana Hills
Qld 4054
e. minesandenergy@ministerial.qld.gov.au
w. <http://www.geoffwilsonmp.com/fixit.php>

The Honourable Paul Lucas MP

Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure & Planning
Shop 2B
84 Florence Street
Wynnum
Qld 4178
e. lytton@queenslandlaborteam.com

The Honourable Desley Boyle MP

Minister for Tourism, Regional Development and Industry
Office 1 "McLeod South"
78-84 Spence Street
Cairns
Qld 4870
e. cairns@queenslandlaborteam.com

The Honourable Stephen Robertson MP

Minister for Health
Unit 5/62 Pinelands Road
Sunnybank Hills
Qld 4109
e. stretton@parliament.qld.gov.au

The Honourable Andrew McNamara MP

Minister for Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation
Shop 3 "Baivista"
357 Esplanade
Scarness
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Parliamentary Secretaries

Mr Stirling Hinchliffe

Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Infrastructure and Planning

Karen Struthers

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health

Jan Jarratt

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Tourism, Regional Development and Industry

Federal Government

The Hon Kevin Rudd MP

Prime Minister
Parliament House
CANBERRA
ACT 2600

The Hon Penny Wong MP

Minister for Climate Change and Water
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