



Senator Tim Storer
Independent Senator for South Australia

MEDIA RELEASE

Drilling and Fracking – The Bight and the Southeast

7 September 2018

“The SA government has banned fracking in the Southeast for 10 years in response to community concerns, now it should end its support for drilling in the Great Australian Bight for the same reason”, said Independent SA Senator Tim Storer.

He was speaking at the end of a visit to Kangaroo Island to speak to community leaders and stakeholders about proposals to drill in the Bight.

“Energy Minister Dan van Holst Pellekaan told parliament this week that the fracking moratorium had been imposed ‘because that is what the people of the Southeast wanted’”, noted Senator Storer.

“The government should apply the same principle to the high level of concern about drilling raised by communities along the coast from Port Lincoln to Lake Alexandrina.”

“The people of the Southeast are concerned about the impact of fracking on the region’s ‘clean, green’ reputation.”

“So are communities along the coast and the government should respond to their concerns.”

Fishing is worth more than half a billion dollars to South Australia as a whole. Tourism is worth \$123m a year to Kangaroo Island alone, directly employing 800 people.

We should not put that at risk from a future oil spill.

“Waves can reach 23m in the Bight and the water is deep by drilling standards, up to 3km.”

“The economic impact of a spill would be disastrous for the economy and wellbeing of the Kangaroo Island community. Modelling by BP, for example, indicates that a spill would cover 750km along the coast,” said Senator Storer.

Next week, Senator Storer will draft an amendment to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 to return final responsibility for authorising or rejecting drilling in the Bight to the Environment Minister. That decision currently sits with the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority.

“This responsibility should never have been ceded by then Minister Greg Hunt in 2014,” said Senator Storer.

“This would mean that Environment Minister Melissa Price would have to address community concern and take responsibility for any decision she takes on drilling in the Bight in the lead up to the next federal election.”

For further information please contact Jim Middleton on 0418 627 066.