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“Chain of Responsibility” Bill puts investment and jobs at risk

The Queensland Government’s *Environmental Protection (Chain of Responsibility) Bill*, now before Parliament, requires major amendment to ensure future investment and employment is not sacrificed.

APPEA Queensland Director Chris Lamont said environmental bonds or financial assurance are widely used across Australia to ensure rehabilitation is completed and should be a feature of any new measures.

“It is a fundamental principle that resource proponents must meet their rehabilitation obligations under the law,” said Chris Lamont.

The Government has stated the Bill is in response to issues related to rehabilitation of mining projects such as the Yabulu Nickel refinery, Texas Silver Mine, Collingwood Tin Mine, and Mount Chalmers Gold Mine.

“Government should not be liable for end-of-life project rehabilitation, but nor should mum-and-dad investors or companies that aren’t responsible for the project,” Mr Lamont said.

“There are inconsistencies right across the Bill and while the Minister’s intention may be clear the Bill takes a different path that could be devastating to future investment and employment.”

“Rushing through legislation with such a broad scope will force investors to question whether they should continue to invest in Queensland when other jurisdictions have more reasonable and measured laws.

“The Queensland Government already has in place a comprehensive financial assurance regime designed to manage the risk of projects failing to meet their environmental obligations. Under this regime, the Queensland Government holds more than \$1 billion in assurance for petroleum activities.

“The Government should address deficiencies by targeting the source of the problem by working with stakeholders rather than rushing through a Bill that will have serious consequences for investment and employment across Queensland.”

Media contact: Kieran Murphy 0408 151 922 or kmurphy@appea.com.au