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NSW Labor's Narrabri Gas Project stance threatens higher gas prices and risks jobs

Comments by the New South Wales Opposition that a State Labor government would ignore the independent environmental approval process now underway and kill the Narrabri Gas Project¹ confirms that NSW's energy debate is reaching new (political) lows.

"Both sides of politics in NSW have dug themselves a big hole by choosing to play politics with energy supply and the environment. The latest comments from the Opposition suggests that Labor intends to dig an even deeper hole," said APPEA Chief Executive Dr Malcolm Roberts.

"The environmental issues associated with onshore gas have been exhaustively analysed by the NSW Chief Scientist and numerous other expert, independent inquiries. The evidence is clear – good regulation and good industry practice mean that onshore gas can be developed safely.

"The economic case for developing local gas resources is irrefutable – well-paid and secure local jobs, state royalties, more secure supply and downward pressure on gas and electricity prices. The Narrabri Gas Project is being developed solely for the domestic market.

"Today, NSW relies on interstate gas for 96 per cent of its needs with its customers paying an unnecessary premium for the short-term political decisions which have blocked safe, local projects. That's not just the view of the gas industry – the ACCC has condemned state bans and moratoriums, calling for projects to be assessed honestly on their merits.

Around 1.3 million households across NSW, 33,000 businesses and more than 250,000 jobs rely on an affordable supply of natural gas. The Narrabri Gas Project could supply up to half of NSW's gas needs.

"Over 40 per cent of the gas used in NSW supports manufacturers making essential items such as glass, bricks, paper, cement, steel, alumina, fertilisers, plastics and chemicals. In most cases, there is no substitute for gas," Dr Roberts said.

"The comments from the Opposition prompt the obvious question: How does killing off the only opportunity for local supply help these businesses?

"The Narrabri Gas Project could be a huge win for local communities and NSW as a whole, if the Opposition tones down the election-eve politics and respects the independent, scientific assessment underway."

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¹ See narrabrigasproject.com.au for more details about the Narrabri Gas Project.