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NSW Labor plays politics with state economic recovery

The decision last night by the NSW Labor Party to vote with the Greens and a slew of independents in support of a gas moratorium was a vote against NSW jobs and for higher gas and electricity prices for NSW customers.

APPEA Chief Executive, Andrew McConville said that the Bill moved by MLC Justin Field would, if it ever were implemented, condemn NSW to higher gas prices and a slower economic recovery, particularly in regions like Narrabri that are already struggling after years of drought and the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“This Bill is a hammer blow to the economic wellbeing of regional NSW at a time that the state needs investment and certainty following the devastating impacts of bushfires and COVID-19,” Mr McConville said.

“A decision on Narrabri is more important than ever, for manufacturing and businesses throughout the state.”

If the Bill was implemented, the Narrabri community would miss out on significant community investment, including the \$15 million Voluntary Planning Agreement with the Narrabri Shire Council to invest in improved infrastructure at the Narrabri Airport, more maintenance for local roads, beautification of the Narrabri sports and tourism precinct, library relocation to allow expansion of the Country University and many other valuable community initiatives.

“The Bill ignores the proven track record of the onshore gas industry in Queensland, where thousands of jobs have been created, billions of dollars invested in regional communities, and hundreds of millions of dollars paid to farmers, with no significant environmental impacts and over 66,000GL of water returned to farmers for their beneficial use, or injected back into aquifers,” Mr McConville said.

“The only way to put downward pressure on gas prices for customers, including manufacturers, is to increase supply and competition. The Narrabri project does just that. Virtue signaling to a small and vocal minority risks making all of NSW more vulnerable.”

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