

Senator.David.Pocock@aph.gov.au

Senator David Pocock
PO Box 6100
Senate, Parliament House
Canberra, ACT 2600

13/7/2023

RE: Thank you for your strong stance on the Darwin Middle Arm Precinct

Dear Senator David Pocock,

The Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) would like to thank you directly for your continued advocacy regarding the Middle Arm “Sustainable” Development Precinct and it’s associated fracking projects in the Northern Territory.

The Precinct and its broader ramifications are of great concern to PHAA. The direct health and wellbeing impacts of this petrochemical and minerals processing facility to the residents of Darwin may be extensive. Decades of research in the USA shows alarming rates of death and disease in communities living in the State’s petrochemical heartland, known as “Cancer Alley”. Yet to date, we have seen no inclination from our decision makers to investigate the potential health impact of the Middle Arm Precinct.

Additionally, we believe this Precinct is in out-right contradiction of Australia’s commitment of the Paris Climate Agreement. The Agreement states that Party’s must promote the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions while fostering sustainable development. However, the Middle Arm Precinct alone may increase NT emissions by 75% and the Beetaloo Basin fracking site, which will fuel Middle Arm, may increase Australia’s emissions by 22%. Climate change will make parts of this country unsafe to live. Reducing emissions is the *only* real way to mitigate climate change and its critical health impacts.

Finally, practical questions cannot be ignored. Questions regarding the likelihood of the Precinct being inundated due to climate induced flooding and cyclones, or the long-term decline in demand for gas as the world moves towards renewable energies, or the capacity to create and maintain the huge network of roads, piping and facilities for these projects in the relatively underpopulated and under-resourced NT. We do not believe The Middle Arm Precinct is either environmentally or economically sustainable, nor do we believe the risks to health and safety have been considered directly (in Darwin) or broadly (climate change impacts to all Australians and beyond).

We thank you again for making it clear that the health of Territorians and Australian’s are at serious risk if these developments continue. Please do not hesitate to contact PHAA if you wish to discuss this issue further.

Yours Sincerely,



Terry Slevin
Chief Executive Officer
Public Health Association of Australia