NSW Government urged to reject Bill that props up the coal industry

The Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) will today ask the NSW parliament to shelve plans that prop up the polluting coal and gas export industry at the expense of public health.

The Bill gives coal and gas developers a leg-up by removing the specific requirement project applications consider downstream and global greenhouse gas emissions.

“This is irresponsible given the distressing impacts of bushfires destroying communities from one end of Australia to the other, linked to global warming caused by greenhouse gases,” said PHAA Senior Policy Officer, Dr Ingrid Johnston.

Dr Johnston will appear before today’s NSW parliamentary hearing into the Environmental and Assessment the Act (Territorial Limits Bill). She will appear alongside PHAA’s NSW President, Dr Patrick Harris.

“At face value the proposed changes suggest what happens within NSW borders, stays within NSW borders. It’s not the state’s fault or problem.”

“But the last couple of months have demonstrated all too clearly that bushfire smoke doesn’t respect borders. Just ask people in the west coast of New Zealand.”

“Climate change impacts, by their very nature, are cross-jurisdictional and global. More intense fires, longer and more severe droughts, rivers drying up, increased flooding, more intense cyclones and tropical storms, increasing length and intensity of heat waves. None of these impacts has any respect for borders.

“The life cycle of coal mining and the global nature of climate change must be considered.”

PHAA calls on the Berejiklian government to withdraw the Bill pending the outcome of the independent expert inquiry into the 2019-20 bushfires which should inform the Government’s approach to dealing with climate change in the planning process.

“If there are no problems with downstream emissions, why remove the requirement to consider them? The very existence of the Bill acknowledges the reality of the reasons why it should not be supported,” Dr Johnston said.

The PHAA is the leading national peak body for public health representation and advocacy to drive better health outcomes through evidence informed policy

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