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Independent Planning Commission
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To the Independent Planning Commission

Re: Bylong Coal Project. My letter of support for the Bylong Coal Project.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of KEPCO Bylong Australia Pty Ltd and its proposed coal mine in the Bylong Valley. I particularly direct my comments today towards those who oppose this project, and hope that my thoughts here will strike a chord.

Wishing defeat upon KEPCO and its application may feel to opponents such as yourselves as an act of 'doing good' for yourself, but in the broader picture I would encourage you to rather think broadly about your community, State, nation and national landscape. In that scheme of things

KEPCO's disturbance is a pin-prick on the map, and a pin-prick from which will flow a great volume of prosperity and predominantly good outcomes. And this surely is the way we should evaluate all human developments and impacts.

To expand on that a little, there is no greater density of return one can take from our land than mineral extraction, and from this wealth we can far better afford to consider, among other things, the broadacre damage that has been incurred across this big brown land. Conservation and rehabilitation costs a lot of money and by impoverishing our economy and discouraging high yield small footprint developments like the Bylong mine we push the prospects of such larger scale repair.

It is much easier to stop than to create. But it is only with a wealthier economy, made up of more concentrated impacts like Bylong's, that we can expand our ability to turn back the tide of widespread environmental damage we are already facing in Australia.

Various other benefits will flow from the project. Bylong Valley coal is superior in quality to the alternative coals that will be used if NSW does not supply South Korea with it. It also has special qualities that are specifically required for these South Korean power stations there. Among many other tasks, those facilities have helped to put Samsung telephones in many of our hands. As consumers, we have a duty to continue contribute to the supply chain, surely. And you don't escape the fundamentals of this argument by owing an Apple!

In my own Bachelor of Science Honours geology degree, I studied the geology of this very district in my thesis and it is very pleasing to see today

how the wine, tourism, coal mining and agricultural sectors have all built from the early beginnings in gold. Maybe soon silver will be added. The earth has served us all well, and will again when the Bylong coal mine goes ahead, in support of our mutual greater good. The environmental measures and modifications KEPCO has instated are, from my experience, of an extraordinarily high standard.

I appeal also to those of you from the farming community who depend on the mining sector for the implements, fertilisers, transport options, and energy we produce to plough, harvest, truck and ship. If we pretend we are not connected and interdependent economically, we are truly pretending.

Mining is a drought proof industry, so maybe it is at this time that farmers can pay some respect for an industry that goes on paying a huge per cent royalties, keeping the baseload economic taps flowing for schools, hospitals and roads. We wish you rain and a return to prosperity.

I recall with fondness a time when our two great primary industries collaborated very well, before we were played off against each other by politicians and greens who often put a love of their own power ahead of a sense of holistic purpose. They sabotage our desire for communal prosperity and offer a false trade-off between development and the natural world around us. They present false 't-shirt' dichotomies like FARMS NOT COAL but the real aim for communal well-being is to have FARMS AND COAL in responsible harmony.

NSW has high quality coal for steel, and for energy, but unlike other industries we don't have the freedom to 'find alternative sites'. Coal lies in the earth where it was formed, and that is where we must mine it. Pitching

mining and farming against each other, one is good and one is bad, is nonsense. Clearly there is a sophisticated synergy operating between mining and agriculture and the Australian economy depends heavily on this economic synergy operating sensibly.

Through my chairmanship of the Sydney Mining Club I have worked with KEPCO Bylong Australia Pty Ltd for around three years now and I commend KEPCO for its tenacity and courage in holding to its vision in the face of opposition, some of which has been very selfish and distorted in its scope. As I said, it's easy to delay things up but it takes huge discipline and cost to build a great mine.

Even if you don't buy Samsung, Hyundai or Kia, we should have regard for an important bilateral relationship we have with South Korea. Of the 17,000 troops we sent to the Korean peninsula in the early 1950s conflict, 340 never returned. This commitment is well-remembered by South Korea. Who better to have as a responsible development partner than a company that is 51% owned by a long-time Australian bilateral friend?

The reason it is here in Australia is because it needs our resources. For those of us who champion renewable energy sources, let me say emphatically that it is coal that will get us to new levels of renewable take up, not opposition to it. Producing silicon for PV cells is highly energy intensive, lithium-cobalt-and-nickel for batteries, and the great stanchions that hold up wind turbines is achieved by us, the mining sector. Steel itself is an alloy of carbon and iron and China alone pours over a billion tonnes of it every year.

The mining industry is ready to play its role in getting us all there. We are ready to discover, develop and energise, so please acknowledge us for all

that we do. Then, you will then better understand that the demand for minerals such as Bylong Coal is real and that it helps other people around the globe. It is with our products that humankind has doubled its lifespan in the last hundred years. It was once a rare event for someone to know their grandparent, for long anyway.

I can understand the macabre pleasure in generating the relatively small amount of effort that is required today to stop a great project. From it must come a great sense of righteous power. Destruction is of course justified where something better is there to replace. Right now we don't have that. Your house might be 'off grid' but your streetlights, trucks, trains, tractors, hospitals, and airlines are not.

The solutions will not be found through the anger of the protest. They will be found through optimism, science, investment and confidence in the investment climate. That is a confidence I think we owe our South Korean friends as they set about building this great mine and contributing to the prosperity of the Mudgee District.

I was shocked to see in recent figures by *The Economist* that Australia today rates second from the bottom above China for 'Rule of Law' and NSW is way down with the Congo for 'Investment Attractiveness' with miners (*Fraser Institute*). Maybe it is time again to show the world that Australians are still about doing and winning, and not just stopping.

So as you leave this meeting and turn the key in your hydrocarbon fuelled car, maybe that is a good moment to reflect on how inelastic your own demand for all good things is - transport, water, supermarket supplies, rock concerts, street lighting, communications and so much more. And as you

drive home to be thankful to those you don't see who provide you the very things your lifestyle is made from.

For South Korea, let us be those people.

I commend the Bylong project as a much-needed new mineral project for NSW and the district of Mudgee. Please consider these thoughts. Thank you.

Regards



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