



Tuesday, November 26th 2024

The Hon. Anthony Albanese MP
Prime Minister
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Sent via email

Dear Prime Minister,

RE: Nature Positive (Environmental Protection Australia) Bill 2024

The Chamber of Commerce & Industry WA (CCIWA) and the Chamber of Minerals and Energy WA (CME) are deeply concerned about the prospect of the Nature Positive bill package – including the Nature Positive (Environment Protection Australia) Bill 2024 – passing through Federal Parliament.

It is our organisations' view that the Bills in their current form – even without a climate trigger – would do great damage to Western Australia's economy. Reform to improve environment outcomes while streamlining processes is needed, but this package delivers on neither front.

The EPA Bill would establish a Canberra-based agency, staffed by bureaucrats with little Ministerial oversight or accountability. Under a broad delegation power, the agency will administer the current EPBC Act and based on their assessment could ultimately decide whether WA projects receive approval.

Based on what we observe with current Federal environmental decision-making, our organisations have no confidence this agency, particularly with the extra independence, would get the balance right between the environment, and the social and economic benefits of projects.

The Bill does not just risk mining and the jobs that sector creates to help families break out of intergenerational disadvantage. It also risks the rollout of new transmission infrastructure, vital for connecting renewables to demand centres. And it risks the development of new housing lots, critical for relieving pressure in the rental market.

As such, if the Bill passes it will exacerbate the current cost of living crisis.

We urge you to allow the current Bills to lapse, and restart and conduct robust and transparent consultation on new environmental laws in the next Parliament. Only through a restart of this process can the Government hope to achieve improved outcomes for Australia's environment, and more efficient and effective approvals processes.



Importantly, this process needs to give proper analysis of the costs of any proposed legislation. It also needs to clarify what will be achieved that is not already achieved by Western Australia's transparent, robust and highly regarded approach to environmental approvals.

This issue is of the highest priority for Western Australia, and should the current Bill pass, it will be a key focus for WA business and industry in the lead-up to the next Federal election.

Yours sincerely,

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Chief Executive Officer
CCIWA

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Chief Executive Officer
CME WA