

# No Uranium Mines For Queensland

Premier Peter Beattie  
PO Box 15185  
City East  
Brisbane QLD 4002

Dear Premier Peter Beattie,

I am deeply concerned that Queensland Labor is considering supporting a change in uranium mining policy at state or federal level to allow more uranium mines. As you know, current Queensland Labor policy prohibits expansion of the nuclear industry in Queensland. This is an excellent stance which I do not wish to see changed.

I urge you and the Labor Party to maintain Queensland's "no uranium mines" policy because:

**The people do not want uranium mining:** A 2005 *Morgan Newspan* poll of 662 Australians showed that 77% of ALP voters are opposed to the development of any new uranium mines.

**Uranium mining puts workers at increased risk:** Besides the usual accidents inherent in mining, uranium adds the extra danger of lung and cancer-related disease for workers inhaling uranium dust and exposure to radon; (<http://www.wise-uranium.org/uhm.html>). **Accidents can happen:** Energy Resources of Australia (ERA - owned by Rio Tinto) has recently been sued after workers drank and showered in contaminated water.

**Nuclear power won't stop Climate Change:** Substantial greenhouse gas emissions are generated across the nuclear fuel cycle. Nuclear power emits more greenhouse gases per unit energy than most renewable energy sources, and that comparable deficit will widen as uranium ore grades decline. (<http://beheer.oprit.rug.nl/deneen>)

**Uranium mining damages the natural environment:** Huge quantities of water are used to process uranium. *Olympic Dam* in South Australia uses 33 million litres of water per day from the Great Artesian Basin. The water is made radioactive and highly acidic. It is left in tailings dams where it continues to contaminate the environment. Tailings leaks do happen: in 1994, a four year long leak was discovered at *Olympic Dam*. In drought-ridden Queensland, why put our existing water at risk?

**Uranium mines can endanger Indigenous people:** The health, cultural values and sovereignty of local indigenous peoples are put at risk by uranium mining;

**Uranium contributes to nuclear weapons proliferation:** There is no way to guarantee Australian uranium is not used for nuclear weapons or depleted uranium munitions. The *International Atomic Energy Agency Director General* Mohamed al Baradei recently stated that the safeguards system is 'fairly limited.' Australian uranium used for power generation by Nuclear Weapons States frees up other uranium sources for building nuclear weapons.

**There is no market for Queensland uranium:** The demand for uranium ensured by Howard's recent deal with China is easily met by the *Olympic Dam* mine in South Australia at current production levels, and this mine is soon to expand; *ABARE* forecast that uranium will decrease in value as demand is expected to decrease (March 1, 2006:p33 *The Australian*, "Local miners miss the uranium boat")

**Queensland and Queenslanders can do better :** The *Queensland Government* already has some great energy projects underway, including geothermal, solar and wind projects that we would like to see increased funding directed to. The global demand for wind power and solar energy is rising at rates of 20 to 30 per cent a year.

*Queensland* is uniquely placed to make smart use of our resources and talents to shine as an innovative and independent state if we choose more sustainable ways of managing our energy and resource sector.

I urge you to think not of the small profit that might be possible from uranium mining, but of the huge potential opportunities that exist by not choosing that path. Energy diversification is the future. Let some of the great ideas already underway in this state take the lead. By choosing that future you are choosing what the *Queensland* voters want as well ensuring the long term energy security of this state.

I call on you to reaffirm your commitment to a "no uranium mines" policy for *Queensland* and to ensure that Federal Labor does not follow Howard down the nuclear path. The community does not want it - we don't need it and we can do so much better.

Sincerely,

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_