



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

STANDING COMMITTEE ON STATE DEVELOPMENT

## MEDIA RELEASE

# REPORT TABLED - THE URANIUM MINING AND NUCLEAR FACILITIES (PROHIBITIONS) REPEAL BILL 2019

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

4 March 2020

An Upper House inquiry into the Uranium Mining and Nuclear Facilities (Prohibitions) Repeal Bill 2019 has today drawn to a close with the release of its final report. The report recommends that debate on the bill proceeds in the Upper House, and that the NSW Government supports the repeal of the *Uranium Mining and Nuclear Facilities (Prohibitions) Act 1986* in its entirety.

If the bill is enacted in law, the prohibition on uranium mining in New South Wales would be lifted, making it legal to mine for uranium within State boundaries for the first time since 1987. However, the prohibition on nuclear facilities would still remain in place as a result of prohibitions enacted in Commonwealth legislation.

Chair of the State Development Committee, Taylor Martin said, “the prohibitions on uranium mining and nuclear energy reflect the outdated fears of the 1980s. The safety of nuclear technology has advanced in leaps and bounds since the State prohibition commenced. On the balance of evidence gathered for this inquiry, nuclear power in its emerging small scale applications is a compelling technology where energy policy settings seek to decarbonise emissions while delivering secure, reliable and affordable energy to the New South Wales grid.”

“Despite the share of wind and solar in the NSW electricity generation mix tripling in the past five years, just over seven per cent of the State’s electricity currently comes from these sources. It is clear that wind and solar firming with gas, batteries and pumped hydro would not be an adequate solution to meet the State’s future needs for affordable and reliable electricity following the decommissioning of our ageing coal fired generation assets. There is an imperative for legislators and governments to be genuinely technology-neutral and not lock out appropriate, low-emissions alternatives to replace these ageing assets,” Mr Martin said.

“There are no compelling justifications from an environmental or human safety point of view which would warrant the blanket exclusion of nuclear energy, especially in its emerging small scale applications, from serious policy consideration in New South Wales. The outdated arguments for prohibiting nuclear on the basis of safety are increasingly difficult to defend.”

The report can be accessed via the committee's [website](#).

The Committee Chair is available for comment and interview throughout the day by appointment.

-ENDS-

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