

**Submission  
No 271**

**INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE WESTCONNEX  
PROJECT**

**Name:** Mrs Venera Cavallaro

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Venera Cavallaro

Re: Parliamentary Inquiry into Impacts of Westconnex

30/8/2018

I write this letter regarding the impact that Westconnex has had on myself and family.

We lived at Ramsay Street Haberfield and in November 2013 we received a letter in the mail advising that our family home was being acquired. We were in state of shock and could not believe what we were reading. When we contacted Westconnex the next morning, the reply on the phone was "we have been waiting for your phone Mr Cavallaro". No compassion at all. We met with them and when we explained the value we had put into our home renovating we were told "too bad if you over capitalized in your renovations". We renovated our home to live in, not for it to be taken away and bulldozed.

For the next 8 months, we suffered emotionally and financially,. I suffered from anxiety, my children were scared of where we would end up and not wanting to leave our beautiful renovated home! No one slept or ate. We were on a roller coaster ride. We hid from people asking questions that we could not answer. No one understood what we were going through and still today, no one understands the emotional and financially strain this has taken on my family and I.

We believe that our home was valued incorrectly as we were unable to buy another home in the same suburb renovated the way our home was.

We were one of the first families to leave and while were debt free at this point, unfortunately the money received was not enough to buy another home in Haberfield let alone in a nearby suburb so we had to borrow a great sum of money to buy it and way more to fix it. I have had to go back to work, to help pay for these bills that are piling up. We are just trying to get what we had back but it has been impossible to move forward. Our lives were stress free and Westconnex destroyed our lives.

29/7/2014 was the day we left our home at Ramsay Street and our lives had not been the same. We are still trying to fix our house that we bought, with no help from our local council. We are suffering still greatly financial and emotionally. We don't drive past our old place as it hurts too much.

Leading up to settlement Westconnex team also gave us a lot of trouble and would not provide the funds agreed to.

So much stress that has been put into our lives, we would not wish this upon anyone.

Myself and family would be very happy to provide evidence of the whole process and horrible dealings we had.

Compensation was not adequate to replace everything we lost.

Renovating a home these days is so much more expensive than what was when we renovated Ramsay St, to the point we will not be able to have the amenities we had before in the home. This is quite distressing to our children as they lost something and was not their fault.

My son hated going to school when the house was destroyed and young kids would comment and say "oh saw your house being bulldozed" Do you know how that feels? And a parent how do you fix that? The teachers would have to keep an eye on him as he was an emotional wreck at school and we were concerned he would snap and lose it there.

Our son wrote to Westconnex when he saw the house with no roof and windows. He was and still is extremely angry and the reply was "we are sorry..." really what is that going to do.

As mentioned we are all still suffering with no light at the end of the tunnel.

Lastly, myself, husband Giuseppe and children Marcella and Alfio would not hesitate to stand up and speak to provide our story.

IT NEEDS TO BE TOLD

Venera Cavallaro