

**Submission
No 11**

**INQUIRY INTO PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT
OPERATIONS AMENDMENT (CLEAN AIR) BILL 2021**

Name: Professor Peter Sainsbury

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Congratulations on establishing the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into the Clean Air Bill (2021). It is essential that people living and working in, and visiting, NSW are able to breathe clean, unpolluted air and I very much hope that your Inquiry will assist in ensuring that this becomes the case across the whole of the state.

Unfortunately, this is not the case at present. I am sure that others will provide you with the facts and figures about air pollution and its very harmful effects on human health and I will not repeat them in any detail here. However, as a public health doctor I do wish to add my voice to the calls for cleaner air and to emphasise that:

- there is no safe level of air pollution. Even at very low levels, air pollution causes ill health and premature death;
- NSW standards for air pollution are lagging behind world best practice and as a result people in this state are UNNECESSARILY and PREVENTABLY suffering ill health and premature death;
- the situation can be improved markedly by imposing higher standards relating to particulate matter, oxides of sulphur and nitrogen, and heavy metals;
- while the harmful health effects of air pollution are most severe close to mines, coal fired power stations and industrial sites it is important to note that air pollution travels far from its site of production and so has harmful consequences for people in major places of habitation, for instance Sydney;
- it is also important to note that agricultural processes (eg. tilling, fertilisers, animal waste products) are also potent sources of harmful air pollution, and these also need to be monitored and controlled;
- failure to control air pollution has significant social costs for individuals and families and significant economic costs for the state;
- it is completely illogical and unjust to exempt any sites of production of air pollution from any controls and standards.

In conclusion, I strongly support the Clean Air Bill 2021 and believe that it will lead to dramatic improvements in people's health and prevent much completely unnecessary premature mortality.

Many thanks for considering my submission.