



Kevin Humphries MP

Minister for Mental Health

Minister for Healthy Lifestyles

Minister for Western NSW

MEDIA RELEASE

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THE GREENS NO FRIENDS OF WESTERN FARMERS

Minister for Western NSW Kevin Humphries has called on the Greens to inform regional communities of their radical regional and agricultural policy agenda, following their failure to do so during a recent tour of Western NSW by Federal Greens leader Christine Milne and Greens MLC Jeremy Buckingham last week.

Mr Humphries said that while the Greens were publicly promoting their opposition to coal seam gas development, they have been privately working on a range of policies that would cripple regional communities.

“While Mrs Milne and Mr Buckingham have been touring Western NSW pretending to be the farmer’s best friend, their colleagues in inner-city Sydney have been launching campaign after campaign aimed at destabilising and delegitimising the industries that drive the economies of many Western NSW communities,” he said.

“In the many years the Greens have been in coalition with Labor at both a state and federal level they have proven to be a far bigger threat to the viability of regional communities and the food security of NSW than any of the causes they pretend to crusade on.

“What the Greens fail to tell our farmers is that they have had long-standing agreements with Labor to extend National Parks onto prime agricultural land.

“Other policies of the Greens that would decimate regional industries include: removing the Diesel Fuel Rebate, closing the live cattle and sheep trade, banning surgical mulesing, returning to death duties, not supporting irrigation or broad scale farming, and a total end to the forest products industry.

“The opportunistic Greens have made no secret of their desire to use concerns being raised over coal seam gas to build up their regional support, however this charade is exposed in their long-standing push to have enact more onerous native vegetation laws that would rip property rights away from farmers, strip them of their ability to earn an income and lock up enormous tracts of viable agricultural land.”

Mr Humphries said Mrs Milne and Mr Buckingham’s tour was surprising considering the Greens past support for a viable gas industry in NSW.

“In December 2009, Greens MLC Dr John Kaye said:

The potential for local gas generation should be factored into any planning for the Far North Coast’s energy strategy.

“Unlike the Greens who can’t seem to decide whether they support the introduction of a gas industry, the NSW Government has delivered the most stringent protection of high-quality agricultural land and the toughest mining and coal seam gas controls in Australia, which support a balance between agriculture, mining and the environment,” Mr Humphries said.

“Unlike the Greens, the NSW Government supports sustainable regional economies and a thriving agricultural sector, and is committed to advancing the interests of regional communities and supporting those who live and work in regional areas.”

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