

30 January 2019

Secretary, Economic Policy Scrutiny Committee,
GPO Box 3721,
DARWIN NT 0801Via email: EPSC@nt.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: Petroleum Legislation Amendment Bill 2018Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the *Petroleum Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 (the Bill)*.

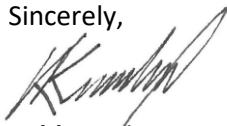
The purpose of the Bill is to give effect to a number of recommendations made by the Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracturing in the Northern Territory (the NT). APPEA appreciates the efforts of the NT Government in progressing the regulatory reforms required to allow the exploration of the Territory's vital and exciting gas resources.

The Bill implements a range of amendments, including the provision of open standing for the review of decisions and determinations through judicial review; the consideration of whether a person or entity is deemed appropriate to hold a permit or licence under this Act; to empower the Petroleum (Environment) Regulations; and ensure enforceability of codes of practice.

While APPEA supports the passage of these amendments in order to provide certainty for companies looking to recommence exploration, we wish to reiterate our concern for potential disruptions to approvals that may occur as a result of the introduction of full standing for judicial review. This introduces a new level of risk to development in the NT by allowing any party, regardless of interest, to bring forward legal proceedings on an approval.

APPEA recommends that broad standing categories be implemented consistent with the proposed changes to the Northern Territory Environment Act¹. This will improve consistency and certainty across legislation while allowing a broad range of relevant people to seek review, including proponents, those directly affected, and those who made a genuine and valid submission in the process.

Sincerely,

**Keld Knudsen**

Policy Director – Exploration and Onshore Environment

¹ <https://denr.nt.gov.au/environment-information/environmental-regulatory-reform/consultation-on-new-environment-protection-legislation>