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## **VICTORIAN GAS EXPLORATION BAN MUST BE OVERTURNED**

The release yesterday of the Victorian Legislative Council report *Inquiry Into Onshore Unconventional Gas in Victoria* represents a missed opportunity for reform, according to free market think tank the Institute of Public Affairs.

“The current ban on all forms of onshore gas exploration in Victoria represents a failure of leadership by Victorian parliamentarians,” says Brett Hogan, Director of Energy and Innovation Policy at the Institute of Public Affairs.

“For a state whose wealth was built on gold to be banning all forms of gas exploration is particularly short-sighted.”

“While there are many reasons why Victorian gas bills are forecast to rise, uncertainty about future sources of supply is pivotal.”

“Limited supplies leads to higher prices, which leads to less customers and destroys the competitive market.”

“Victoria’s traditional strength as a supplier of low-cost energy and Australia’s manufacturing hub is under serious threat as our politicians repeatedly defer new investment until after ‘the next election.’”

“The solution to rising gas prices and limited supplies is not allocation or reservation schemes. Governments should not be picking favoured industries or customers.”

“The Andrews government should show leadership by committing to immediately lift the moratorium on conventional gas exploration and extraction to identify new supplies now.”

“The government should also allow exploration for unconventional gas to commence, while working out a world’s best regulatory regime to manage it, should commercial quantities be found.”

“So long as Victoria’s major political parties maintain a moratorium on exploration for new gas supplies, the pressure on the wholesale price will only get worse,” says Mr Hogan.

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