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## Vote for progress, not protest

A vote for independent candidates and minor parties who oppose the responsible development of Australia's natural gas is a vote for energy insecurity and higher energy costs for families and businesses.

APPEA Chief Executive Dr Malcolm Roberts said protest votes at the July 2 election could deliver dangerous outcomes.

"I am disappointed that Senator John Madigan is the latest candidate to jump on the protest vote bandwagon," Dr Roberts said.

"His call for a permanent ban on all onshore gas development in Victoria is ill-informed and irresponsible.

"There is no scientific or environmental reason to ban onshore gas development. Every credible, independent scientific study into the industry confirms that, with good industry practice and appropriate regulation, onshore gas development is safe.

"Senator Madigan should read the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's comprehensive study into the east coast gas market, released only two months ago. The ACCC rejects moratoriums and points out that removing restrictions on development would boost gas supply, enhance competition and put downward pressure on prices.

"As someone who claims to support Australian manufacturing, Senator Madigan should know that natural gas is irreplaceable for our manufacturers. Natural gas is an indispensable energy source for industry in Victoria and an essential feedstock for manufacturing items such as glass, fertilisers, chemicals and plastics. Almost a third of the gas consumed by industrial customers in Victoria is used as feedstock in manufacturing.

"Rather than chasing the protest vote, Senator Madigan should be supporting the Australian Industry Group, the Plastics and Chemicals Industry Association and APPEA in urging the Victorian Government to lift its moratorium on onshore gas development."

"Scare campaigns against natural gas can threaten supply and result in higher energy costs for consumers. Victoria's 1.8 million gas customers are especially vulnerable. With output from existing gas fields expected to decline from 2017, time is running out to bring new supply into the market.

"If Senator Madigan wants to support manufacturing jobs in Victoria, he should support the gas industry in calling for an end to job-destroying moratoriums on gas development."

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