

Farmer urges landholders to object to State Govt bill

MACALISTER farmer David Hamilton is speaking out against a new State Government bill he calls "unfair and unreasonable".

The Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee is holding a hearing in Toowoomba today to discuss the Mineral and Energy Resources (Common Provisions) Bill

2014.

Mr Hamilton said the new bill could potentially remove a landholders' right to object to the placement of a future mine.

"I think that's unfair and unreasonable," he said.

Nearly 400 submissions have been lodged with the committee.

Chair of the committee

Ian Rickuss said changes in the bill to notification and objection rights for mining proposals and access arrangements for restricted areas on farms topped the list of issues raised by the submissions.

"The changes proposed to public notification and objection rights are not intended to take away

people's rights to comment on major mining projects, nor alter people's rights to comment on the environmental approvals for mining proposals," Mr Rickuss said.

Mr Hamilton said the bill needed to include all people who would be affected by a mine, including neighbours and the local community.

"If there is a mine down the road, they have a right to have a voice," he said.

Shine Lawyers' Glen Martin said the new bill would take away landholders' rights "very significantly".

Mr Martin urged landholders to head to the hearing today and express their concerns.

"The idea of the hearings is to allow landholders to express concerns and how their rights are being affected," he said.

"Everybody in the state should be concerned about this legislation."

The public hearing will be held today from 11.30am-2.30pm at the Burke and Wills Hotel.