



Steve Fielding **Family First** Senator for Victoria



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**FF/46. Thursday January 3, 2008**

# **FAMILY FIRST WANTS ANSWERS ON AQUIFER**

Family First wants answers from the new government about the Latrobe Aquifer, party leader Steve Fielding said today.

The Victorian Senator has written to Labor's Agriculture Minister Tony Burke seeking a meeting to resolve compensation and water security issues on behalf of Yarram farmers.

Senator Fielding said farmers have been waiting more than 10 years for action on the aquifer and should not be left in limbo with the change of government.

"There are still so many questions unanswered," Senator Fielding said.

"What was promised to be the final report into the Latrobe Aquifer has still not been released.

"Farmers were told the report would be released in June, then it was pushed back to December. It is now January and still there is nothing from the government.

"What is more concerning is that the Federal and State governments struck a deal with Exxon Mobil in late December for further oil drilling in the Bass Strait without considering the impact it might have on farmers and the Latrobe Aquifer.

"The current level of drilling is threatening farming and the government should have pushed for higher royalties from the oil company to fix this problem and compensate farmers.

"New drilling is good news for Victoria and Gippsland because it means more natural gas and more local jobs – but this shouldn't come at the expense of farmers' livelihoods."

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