

MEDIA RELEASE 09/07/19

RESIDENTS OF INNER WEST ACCUSE GOVERNMENT OF BETRAYAL OVER SMART FREIGHT INITIATIVE ANNOUNCEMENT

Residents of Williamstown Rd in Melbourne's inner west are furious that truck curfews promised in the Smart Freight Initiative were not included in yesterday's announcement of the initiative negotiated by residents and industry over the last two years.

Dr Kate Lycett, President of the new community group, Save Willy Rd, formed to lobby for measures to ensure that truck numbers on Williamstown Rd do not increase, said she was stunned by the announcement made today. "The Government has not kept its promise to implement night curfews on Williamstown Rd and Buckley St, and these are the most important components of the initiative."

"It is unbelievably disappointing given we have an unprecedented consensus between the transport industry and residents who agree that these curfews are absolutely necessary, and yet the government obstructs their implementation."

Save Willy Rd was formed in response to a recent proposal to increase access to trucks on Williamstown Rd through the implementation of clearways. This proposal was withdrawn after intervention by the local member, Melissa Horne MP. "We were impressed by Melissa's stance on this and can't quite believe that she has gone back on her word on the curfews," said Dr Lycett.

"The plan as it stands now actually makes things much worse, as it funnels the dirtiest trucks onto Williamstown Rd and Buckley St. The impact on residents will be devastating. It has created a two tier system where some residents are going to be much better off and others much worse off."

Unfortunately, those second class residents include the students of Yarraville West Primary School, which is in the diesel fallout zone from Williamstown Rd. "I'm a child health researcher, I know the effects of diesel pollution and these old trucks have no pollution controls. This is a terrible outcome for these children."

Save Willy Rd has committed itself to resuming direct action to fight against the situation now faced by residents. "It's been a long time since there was a protest blockade but if that all has to start up again then we will do that for sure. We will do whatever we need to to protect the health of our children."

For more information visit www.savewillyroad.com

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