

**PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FAO: LOCAL REPORTERS**

TUESDAY 11<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2016

**LOCAL MSP HAILS BLOCKING OF UNDERGROUND COAL GASIFICATION IN SCOTLAND**

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT POLICY GUARANTEES NO UCG IN THE FIRTH OF FORTH**



Underground Coal Gasification will “have no place in Scotland’s energy mix” under the current SNP administration, as confirmed by Paul Wheelhouse MSP, the Scottish Government Minister for Business, Innovation & Energy.

MSP for Kirkcaldy Constituency, David Torrance has welcomed the landmark policy decision following long-held speculation that Underground Coal Gasification could take place in and around the Firth of Forth.

Commenting on the guarantee that no UCG would take place in the Kirkcaldy Constituency, David Torrance MSP said:

“This is fantastic news. There has been a great deal of public unrest and concern about the implications of UCG on the environment, and I have held severe reservations towards this technology for some time.

“It’s great that we’ve taken a cautious, responsible and evidence-based approach when considering the safety of this technology and its environmental implications. I’m delighted that we are now able to openly declare that UCG simply will not take place here in my constituency or anywhere else in Scotland.”

He added: “It would be deeply irresponsible to launch new UCG programs without taking time to consider the safety implications or the environment impact.

“I’d call on the UK Government to match Scotland’s measured and responsible approach.”

The policy decision comes following an independent examination of UCG undertaken by Professor Campbell Gemmell of the University of Glasgow.

Paul Wheelhouse MSP has told the Scottish Parliament that the UCG industry would need to “demonstrate and provide evidence that it can operate to the high environmental standards that the government and public should expect” for the policy to ever be reconsidered.

**ENDS**

**NOTES TO EDITOR:**

David Torrance MSP is pictured with ‘Mr Frackhead’ outside the Scottish Parliament.

Paul Wheelhouse MSP announced that the Scottish Government would not support UCG developments in Scotland on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October. He is the Scottish Government’s Minister for Business, Innovation & Energy.

UCG should not be confused with hydraulic fracturing (also known as “fracking”). Fracking also continues to be blocked by the moratorium put in place by the Scottish Government last year.

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