**The Hon. Josh Frydenberg MP**

**Minister for the Environment and Energy**

**Parliament House**

**Canberra, ACT 2600**

To the Hon. Josh Frydenberg,

As a supporter of the **Australian Koala Foundation’s (AKF) Koala Army**, I am writing to you with grave concerns regarding the status of Koalas and Koala habitats in Australia.

In 2012, the Koala was listed as “Vulnerable” under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* (EPBC Act) by then-Federal Environment Minister Tony Burke, as a result of a 2011 Senate Inquiry.

The Federal Government then made the undertaking to complete a Federal Recovery Plan for the Koala – an undertaking that was due to be finalised by 2014. Indeed, your own Department of Environment and Energy website still notes on the Recovery Plan decision:

*“…a recovery plan for the Koala (combined populations of Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory) will be developed and is to commence following the expiration of the National Koala Conservation and Management Strategy in 2014. This recovery plan will be for those populations covered by the national threatened species listing.”*

The AKF has alerted me the Recovery Plan still has not been completed and Australia’s Koala forests are being logged at an alarming rate to make way for urban development, coal mines, and forestry operations. Responsibility for the Koala is being delegated to the states and local councils – neither of which is properly equipped to deal with the issues at hand. **Current legislation ironically focusses on the Koala itself, and the habitat is almost impossible to protect.** **It is now imperative you implement a federal *Koala Protection Act*, as provided to your Government by the AKF,to protect this habitat.**

As the Federal Minister responsible for this portfolio, and as the custodian of the Koala in Australia under this portfolio, it is now your responsibility to take immediate action on rapidly declining numbers of Koalas in Australia, due to loss of habitat. The worth of the Koala extends far beyond being a species unique to our country. As identified by the AKF for almost 30 years, the importance of the Koala to our national heritage, billions in tourism dollars, our Indigenous community, biodiversity, and even the Koala diplomacy of which our governments are so fond, cannot be underestimated.

As a member of the AKF’s Koala Army, I ask of you the following in your role as custodian of the Koala:

* Will you support a federal Koala Protection Act to protect Australia’s Koala forests?
* Are you asking your State colleagues to take over your role as custodian of the Koala?
* Are you aware that the 2011 Senate Inquiry was of the opinion that the States were incapable of protecting the Koala?
* Are you shirking your responsibility as Minister because you are refusing to write a Koala Recovery Plan which should have been finalised in 2014?
* How are you going to take an active role in protecting the Koala in Australia?

I look forward to your response.