

Tim Duddy from the Caroon Coal Action group described the draft Land Access Bill, introduced as a convoluted, complex and a feast for lawyers.

The NSW Minister for Mines Ian Macdonald says he introduced the bill to try to restore status quo after the Court case "Brown/Alcorn and Ancor V Coal Mines Australia" made mineral exploration almost impossible in the face of red tape and legal complexities over ownership and rights.

Tim Duddy says that's not the case.

"This is not returning to the status quo.

"It's putting all the responsibility and costs that were with the mining industry and putting it on the land holder.

"The mining companies are the ones benefiting but the costs are being shifted to the land holders."

He says preliminary legal advice indicates that every land owner and partnership owner will be affected and a leasee could allow access to land for exploration by mining companies over the wishes of a title owner.

The Bar Association is not happy with the moves either.

They are gravely concerned about the retrospective nature of the bill, because it relieves people from their right to litigate for fair compensation.

Tim Duddy is concerned about the State Government's apparent readiness to change the rules to suit the mining industry.

"It's gravely concerning that everytime the mining industry is shown to have done the wrong thing, they put pressure on the government to change things even if there's going to be huge environmental harm its unbelievable."

Tim Duddy says it is too early to assess any move to take this matter to the High court.