



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Windsor addresses Property Institute Conference in Tamworth

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor today addressed the Australian Property Institute's (API) Rural Conference in Tamworth.

Mr Windsor spoke on the topic of "Regional Development – Where to from here – there are options" and urged the API Members to see the benefits of a vibrant regional Australia to balance the growth being experienced in metropolitan Australia and raised the need for a long term plan for regional Australia that in the first instance would necessitate some Government intervention in the market.

He also expressed to the API members that it was in everyone's best interest to support such Government intervention so that the private sector could see investment opportunities in regional Australia and pursue them.

"The growth of the property market in metropolitan Australia has really been quite amazing however, the decline in country areas, particularly in smaller centres has been more widespread and in some instances, with devastating personal impact.

This is why we need to have some Government intervention in setting the direction for growth in the country," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor sited the very recent policy changes being afforded to the ethanol industry as a very good example of what could be done to help country Australia develop its opportunities.

"The Federal Government has announced that it will continue the grant that they introduced for Australian ethanol producers to cover the excise they placed on the use of ethanol for another 5 years and then reduce it in equal instalments over the next 5 years.

I congratulate the Government for seeing the value of intervening in the "market" to encourage the growth of a fledgling industry that could become a big contributor to regional Australia's economy.

Mr Windsor also raised the issue of economic rationalism and competition policy and cited an example as the need to review the formula for the provision of aged care beds as an example of the further need for greater intervention by the Government.

"The same formula is used for the Minister's electorate of about 100 sq km in Melbourne that is used for the 55,000 sq km of the New England electorate with little or no public transport to get around," Mr Windsor said.

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Those members of the community that believe that all should be left to the market don't seem to comment on the exemption the family home has regarding capital gains tax on the Sydney property market or the \$1.7 billion of taxpayer funds that have gone into the first Home Owners Scheme to help the building industry.

Zonal taxation was also promoted by Mr Windsor to the API members.

“Zonal taxation is one tool in a bag of measures that could enhance opportunities in the country and encourage investment.

At the moment, the Government appears to be fobbing off the need to intervene in such a way,” Mr Windsor said.

“Governments have been saying one thing and doing another.”

On one hand it is suggested there is great concern for the development of our towns and on the other government policy that is predicated on economic rationalist agendas.

Mr Windsor concluded his address by expressing the need for Government recognition of smallness, remoteness and distance experienced by country Australians and therefore the need to intervene in the market to grow country opportunities and at the same time help alleviate some of the metropolitan areas problems.