



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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MEDIA RELEASE

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NATURAL GAS PIPELINE GREAT, CRUNCH TIME FOR NATIONALS ON ETHANOL - WINDSOR

The Independent Federal Member for New England, Tony Windsor, has welcomed the announcement of a successful Natural Gas Pipeline Tender from Dubbo to Tamworth.

"I would particularly congratulate the Chairman of the Central Ranges Natural Gas and Telecommunications Association, Peter Pulley, and Deputy Chairman, Margaret Thomas, for their leadership and tenacity on this issue," Mr Windsor said.

"It is seven years since Mr Pulley convened a meeting in Tamworth to discuss the possibility of extending a gas pipeline from Dubbo to our region."

"There have been many times when the Association experienced government regulatory hurdles but to their great credit they have maintained a positive vision for the pipeline."

"Peter Pulley has put in hundreds of hours of his personal time to drive this issue and he deserves due recognition for keeping the team of hard workers together."

Mr Windsor said that the next week in the Federal Parliament would be critical to the future of both the pipeline and the proposed ethanol plant at Gunnedah which are dependent on one another.

He said amendments to the Energy Grants (Cleaner Fuels) Scheme Bill 2003 could be introduced into the Senate that could ensure the future of the ethanol industry and the Natural Gas Pipeline.

"The Democrats in the Senate have some very constructive amendments that will extend the timeline in the legislation beyond the five year excise exemption period currently in the Bill."

"If these amendments aren't accepted by the Government both industries will fail to eventuate."

Mr Windsor said it will be a real test for the National Party as to how serious it is about ethanol.

"Crunch time has come and it's time for the Nationals and the Liberals to stand up for a viable ethanol industry by endorsing at least a seven year fuel excise exemption from start up rather than the current five year exemption from September 2003 as is currently in the Bill."

He said a meeting of MPs, Mayors from across Australia, medical professionals and scientists, is taking place on Monday in Canberra to let the Federal Parliament know how important ethanol is to the future of country Australia.

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