



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Windsor Expresses Concerns Over Net Impacts Of Trade Agreement

The Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor, has expressed some concerns over the net impact of the US/Australia Trade Agreement at the same time as complimenting the Trade Minister, Mark Vaile, for his genuine efforts in attempting to reach an agreement that opened access for all Australian industries

Mr Windsor said, "I am concerned at the way the beef and sugar industries have been handled. Sugar has been left out altogether and beef, which was mooted as a big potential winner from any free trade agreement, will now have to wait 18 years for full access to the US markets."

Mr Windsor said "It is important that the Parliament is able to analyse the fine print that underpins this agreement and not just put a positive or negative spin on the major announcements."

"We need to understand the net impact on Australia's manufacturing industries of unrestricted access to Australian markets."

"What does this mean long term for major employers in the manufacturing sector, particularly for regional manufacturers, will they be able to compete against the scale of American business?" Mr Windsor said.

"These are issues that need to be thrashed out."

"Obviously the agreement on the surface has positive benefits for some industries but it is definitely not a free trade agreement between two nations."

Mr Windsor argued that the abandonment of the sugar industry in the trade deal should mean Australian governments get serious about producing ethanol from sugar."

"There is a real need for the Government to shift its current position on ethanol production from a five year excise free period starting in September 2003 to allowing a seven year excise free period to start from the commencement of production."

"That would allow sugar communities the option of ethanol production rather than a struggle to exist under the current world sugar markets," concluded Mr Windsor.

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