



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Labor Supports Ethanol Industry And Seeks Further Meetings To Verify Long Term Viability**

The Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor, has described the meeting with the Federal Opposition Leader, Mark Latham, as a positive step toward the establishment of an ethanol industry. Proponents of the industry from Gunnedah and Dalby met with Mr Latham and Shadow Minister for Mining, Energy and Forestry, Joel Fitzgibbon, to ascertain the Labor Party's view since the change in Leadership.

Mr Windsor said, "Mr Latham was supportive of the ethanol industry and was prepared to consider industry driven amendments that the Government may introduce in the Senate. This is a shift from the current Opposition stance of supporting the Government's Ethanol legislation unamended."

"This is a breakthrough for potential investors who are unlikely to proceed if the legislation passes unamended through the Senate."

"One outcome we have sought from Labor is to support the Government if the Government will amend its current Ethanol Bill to include more positive incentives for new entrants into the ethanol industry. Mr Latham has said he will consider any amendments that the Government may make as long as the industry can demonstrate long term viability."

"The ethanol industry is still concerned that the Government's Bill in its current form does not grant sufficient excise freedom from the start of production to allow a viable investment platform."

"The industry and their financiers are saying that the Government's current legislation needs to be amended from the current position of five years excise freedom from September 2003 to seven years excise freedom from start of production."

"My interpretation of the Federal Opposition's position is that if the Government was prepared to accept industry driven changes, the Opposition would give strong consideration to supporting the amended legislation."

"Mr Latham has also agreed to have the Shadow Minister for Mining, Energy and Forestry, Joel Fitzgibbon, meet again with the industry and their financiers with a view to verifying long term viability, allowing the Labor Party to further its policy position. Good policy on ethanol will ensure new investment in regional Australia."

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