



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**TONY WINDSOR MP**  
**INDEPENDENT**  
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR NEW ENGLAND

Shop 5  
259 Peel Street  
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

**All Mail:** PO Box 963  
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

**Ph:** (02) 6761 3080  
**Toll Free:** 1300 301 839  
**Fax:** (02) 6761 3380  
**e-mail:** [Tony.Windsor.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Tony.Windsor.MP@aph.gov.au)  
**Web Page:** [www.tonywindsor.com.au](http://www.tonywindsor.com.au)

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

29 September 2004

# **Property Rights Are The Key To Good Environmental Outcomes Windsor Proposes Just Terms Legislation**

The Independent Member for New England, Mr Tony Windsor, attended Monday night's meet the candidates meeting held jointly by the NSW Farmers' Association and the Tamworth & District Chamber of Commerce & Industry. Mr Windsor highlighted the property rights issues raised at the meeting that are important to the New England Electorate.

Mr Windsor said "Securing property rights or resource security over water and vegetation is essential to ensuring continued investment and employment within our farming businesses.

"My work in helping the Namoi groundwater users, and on the 18 month Agricultural Fisheries and Forestry Committee (AFFA) Inquiry into Future Water Supplies for Australia's Rural Industries and Communities, has given me a good understanding of the importance of securing property rights for farmers as a means of gaining good environmental outcomes.

"As the wider community would be aware, if equity or issues of fairness are ignored, disaffected farmers are unable to embrace vital environmental reforms due to the impact on their businesses and they have become skilled at blocking these outcomes.

"As yet, despite assurances dating back to the competition policy agreements of 1995, not one dollar has been sent to a farmer as restitution for government over allocated water that has been transferred back to the environment. This cause and effect is leading to a failure to deliver vital environmental water reforms.

"The two Coalition candidates at Monday night's meeting seemed unclear on the way forward for property rights and unfortunately both the ALP and the Green candidate are not prepared to support any moves to recognise these equity issues.

"Given the forecast budgetary surplus, money is no longer the issue that prevents recognition of equity for farmers in these issues, and I am proposing 'Just terms' legislative changes at Federal and State levels rather than another Council of Australian Government (COAG) Agreement given that governments have already walked away from the June 25<sup>th</sup> National Water Initiative (NWI) agreement for political purposes.

"My first Parliamentary vote was in the NSW 1991 hung Parliament where my casting vote delivered the just terms legislation that recognised the equity needs of property owners when Government acquired land for road works and similar purposes.

"The community's recognition and governments responses to the need for vegetation and water reform over the last five years has outpaced the legislative process. Perhaps we have reached the stage where the National Competition Policy and COAG processes have failed and we need to concentrate on complimentary legislation for property rights in our State and Federal Houses of Parliament. I will propose draft legislation for the Federal Parliament and work with my NSW State counterparts, Richard Torbay and Peter Draper, to see complimentary legislation introduced into the NSW Parliament," Mr Windsor concluded.

---

**For further information contact Tony Windsor, Ph (02) 6761 3080 OR 0427 668 868**