



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Media Release

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ABC Landline program funding worth fighting for

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor has backed calls from NSW Farmers' Association President Mal Peters for the ABC to reconsider the future of its rural and regional program, Landline.

"Landline is a program that has provided country people with a weekly update of relevant information about issues impacting on their lives.

It has been accurate in its reporting and unbiased on the issues which it covers.

Adequate funding for the Landline program is worth fighting for and I urge country people to get vocal about the proposed cutback in time from one hour to 30 minutes," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor believes Landline is not only important to country ABC viewers.

"Landline has a good following in the city as well as in the country.

It has provided many country people who live in the city with important news and information about what's happening in the country.

Many of these people still have business interests in the country and Landline is a way of helping these people continue in their support of the country and therefore helps maintain investment and jobs in country Australia," Mr Windsor said.

According to Mr Windsor, Landline also plays a significant role in showcasing country opportunities to city people.

"There are stories of innovative ideas that have been developed in the country aired on Landline which have opportunities both for city and country application.

The airing of such developments on Landline into city lounge rooms has the ability to attract investment into the country as well as providing city people with the opportunity to see that there is life west of the Great Dividing Range and a very fulfilling life at that.

So the ABC plans to cut back on the quality of the Landline program will have a much greater impact on the country than it will on the ABC budget with the small saving that will be made by reducing the time from one hour to 30 minutes and I join with NSW Farmers' Association President Mal Peters in calling on the ABC Chairman Donald McDonald and Minister for Communication, Senator Helen Coonan currently visiting the country to bring pressure to bear on the programming people at the ABC to reconsider this decision," Mr Windsor said.

For further information contact Tony Windsor, Ph (02) 6761 3080 or 0427 668868