



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Media Release

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Windsor issues invitation to Coonan to publicly debate Telstra sale

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor has issued an invitation to the Minister for Communications, the Hon Senator Helen Coonan to publicly debate the full sale of Telstra in Inverell at her earliest convenience.

“On December 15, 2004 I emailed the Minister for Communications the Hon Senator Helen Coonan an invitation to visit the electorate of New England at her earliest convenience to meet with local people and discuss their concerns over their telecommunication services and the government's proposal to fully privatise Telstra.

My invitation still stands for the Minister to visit and I would also invite the Minister to publicly debate with me and others the Government's position on Telstra.

A public debate would enable the Minister more of an opportunity to expand on the Government's position and put it before a forum of country people on whom the Government's decision will impact.

I suggest Inverell as the location as it is a bustling medium sized country community surrounded by a very active agricultural area in the north of the New England electorate – a community and area that would benefit greatly from increased access to telecommunication services.

Inverell is also close to the Queensland border and therefore close to The Hon Bruce Scott, Member for Maranoa and new Queensland Nationals President to whom I would also extend an invitation along with an invitation to the new Queensland Senator Barnaby Joyce who is encouragingly speaking with a good deal of commitment to country people.

The Minister should have nothing to fear in facing a public forum.

If Senator Coonan is as committed to the benefits of the full sale of Telstra as she appears to be, she should be happy enough to debate the issues publicly in front of the people who are going to be the ones who have to wear the impacts of her Government's decision.

I look forward to the Minister's acceptance of my invitation,” Mr Windsor said.

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