



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Health funding before tax cuts - Windsor

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor has entered the health debate suggesting that any surplus in the Federal Government's budgetary process should be allocated to improving health facilities across the nation.

Mr Windsor's claims follow suggestions from a city based medical group that certain country based medical facilities should be closed so the existing funds could be more efficiently utilised through centralising some services to larger centres.

"The most important issue at both a State and Federal Government level is health.

Any surplus at either level should be funnelled to the areas of shortfall.

It is obvious that health service funding is at breaking point.

For those in the Federal Government to suggest that tax cuts are more important than the provision of health facilities indicates that they aren't speaking to people or if they are, they aren't listening to the answer," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor said that a \$2 a week tax cut would mean little in terms of personal disposable income but if channelled into health it would provide \$1 Billion in top up funding.

"The Federal Government has a surplus in excess of \$13 Billion to be allocated - surely health should be at the front of the queue.

Funds could be spent on incentives to doctors, nurses and allied health services to encourage a more equitable distribution of services as well as developing medical, dental and other allied health school facilities at country based universities like the University of New England.

The tax cut argument is very thin when outcry and expectation for better health services is at a deafening level.

Centralisation of some services to major centres as suggested by the city based medical group as a solution, shows their complete lack of understanding of meeting the needs of the community particularly when the money is available to fix the problem," Mr Windsor said.

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