



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Media Release

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Windsor supports Vaile on keeping Single Desk

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor has strongly supported Deputy Prime Minister Mark Vaile on his position of keeping the Single Desk for the marketing of Australian wheat exports.

“I strongly support Deputy Prime Minister Mark Vaile’s position to keep the Single Desk to market Australian wheat exports functioning as it is.

Having been a member of the Grains Council of Australia and the NSW Farmers Grains Committee, I fully understand the need for a strong single entity to do the best for Australian wheat in overseas markets.

I also agree with Mark Vaile that we should keep separate the issues of the Single Desk wheat marketing and the problems of the AWB currently being investigated by the Cole Royal Commission.

These are two different issues and it is only those ideological opportunists opposed to a single desk who are using the AWB troubles to raise the issue again.

Anybody that believes that US Grain traders would obtain a better on-farm wheat price for Australian farmers has no concept of the real world.

The majority of Australian wheat growers want to retain the single desk and I will give my full support to Mr Vaile if there are any moves to break up the current arrangements with AWB,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor is also encouraging Mr Vaile to look more closely at increasing our domestic market use of wheat through the mandating of ethanol in petrol lessening our dependence on the Middle East as the US President announced last week in his State of the Union address.

“I would encourage Mr Vaile to look at the President Bush’s strategy for alternative energy and move towards the mandating of 10% ethanol in petrol as a means of developing domestic markets for surplus grain rather than having to sell in a corrupt world market.

A 10 % mandate would remove half of Australia’s exportable wheat thus avoiding the farce that the AWB is going through now and also cutting the influence of the Middle East over Australia’s domestic costs.

It just needs political will to drive our wheat further,” Mr Windsor said.

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