



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## Media Release

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### **John Anderson admits Telstra guarantees not ‘enshrined’ in legislation**

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor has welcomed the admission by Member for Gwydir and former Deputy Prime Minister and National Party leader, John Anderson that the guarantees supposedly given to the National Farmers Federation and country people with regard to parity pricing for basic telephone and broadband services are not enshrined in the Telstra sale legislation.

“I welcome John Anderson’s admission on ABC Radio yesterday that the promises made to and by the National Farmers Federation former President Peter Corish of guarantees that country people would have ‘future parity pricing for basic telephone and broadband services’ enshrined in legislation if Telstra was privatised were not actually there at all.

Peter Corish used this commitment to convince Senator Barnaby Joyce to vote for the sale when Senator Joyce’s vote was crucial to the sale.

Despite many questions to the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister in the Parliament and to Peter Corish, no one has been able to show where in the legislation the guarantees have been ‘enshrined’,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor said that Inverell National Party member Mr John (Wacka) William’s motion at the National Party Conference in Ballina recently asking for guarantees of parity of pricing phone fax and internet line charges and John Anderson’s admission that no such legislative ‘enshrinement’ exists exposes the lie on which the sale of Telstra was predicated.

“Mr Anderson’s feeble excuse that the Government has the power to demand parity of pricing through ‘regulations’ on Telstra’s licence makes a mockery of the original ‘guarantee’.

Mr Anderson knows full well that any so called regulation can be changed through the stroke of the Minister’s pen and is not subject to legislative change.

For John Anderson to say, ‘The legislation that was passed last year gives the Government the power to legislate. That’s the way it works’, is more of his ‘trust us’ attitude that is now wearing very thin with country people.

Over 80% of country people didn’t want Telstra to be fully sold and despite this John Anderson and his National Party colleagues invoked their arrogant ‘trust us’ attitude and went ahead and voted for the sale telling country people that parity of pricing for basic telephone and broadband services were enshrined in the legislation.

With the sale promises now exposed as dishonest, those associated with the duping of Senator Joyce (who was new to the Parliament at the time) should be ashamed of the roles they played,” Mr Windsor said.

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