



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

13 September 2006

### **PM's call for more land release another city-centric policy**

The Prime Minister's call for the release of more land in metropolitan Australia is another disappointingly city-centric policy according to Tony Windsor, the Independent Member for New England.

Speaking during a debate about the role of local government and the job that it does in the local communities of Australia, Mr Windsor indicated his concern with the Prime Minister's comments.

Mr Windsor told the Parliament, "I am very much in support of local government being maintained and that we do not just look at the business of how they can most efficiently deliver the services to people at the cheapest possible cost.

I have said in this place (the Parliament) before that, in terms of that sort of economic rationalist thinking, the most efficient way to deliver the greatest number of services to the highest number of individuals at the lowest possible unit cost is to put those people in a feedlot, and that is exactly what we have done in terms of some of our major cities.

The Prime Minister also quoted the Deputy Leader of the Opposition today regarding some very similar statement that she had made. So the feedlot mentality is in fact the policy of both sides of this parliament, and the cheapest way of providing services to people is to put them into major cities and ignore the regional consequences.

I do not think the opposition has been right in terms of its stance on this issue either, but the Prime Minister has maintained a view that we should be opening up more and more land around our major cities and that, in some sort of convoluted fashion, that would cheapen the price of housing.

That is an indication of where the government is going in terms of policy, and it is a very strong indication to regional local government that the two major parties here, the Liberal Party and the Labor Party essentially stand for a centralisation of the population—the feedlot mentality, which is the issue that I was talking about a moment ago.

We can look at the geography of the Sydney basin, the pollution impacts of the Sydney basin and the health impacts of the Sydney basin in the future, yet the Prime Minister stands up in this parliament day after day and says that we should release more land in our major cities and that that in some way will have an impact on the cost of housing, in a nation the size of ours," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor pointed to yesterday's city based Daily Telegraph where, the headline read 'CITY SMOG KILLS 1400' to support his argument.

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“The Government is encouraging more land release in the city and yet, as reported on the front page of the Daily Telegraph, health officials revealed to a public inquiry that smog was contributing to the deaths of asthmatics and victims of chronic respiratory and cardio vascular illnesses estimating that between 600 and 1400 deaths could be attributed at least partly to Sydney’s foul air.

Surely releasing more land in city areas is only going to add to the pollution and health problem,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor believes that this example of pro-major city development policy by the Liberal, National and Labor Parties was reason for country people to vote for country Independents.

“The Liberal, National and Labor Parties are continuing to overlook the needs of country people because the majority of Australians live in the city.

It is only country Independents who are prepared to stand up for their country communities and the more elected to the Parliaments the better,” Mr Windsor said.