



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Redistribution a real opportunity for better country representation – Independents!!

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor believes that the final redistribution for the Federal seats in New South Wales represent excellent prospects for country Independent candidates at the next election.

Mr Windsor said it was sad to see the loss of a country seat but the new boundaries in Parkes, Calare and Macquarie opened up opportunities for candidates who are serious about representing people rather than party machines.

“The Nationals in particular will be vulnerable at the next election with their non-performance in representing country people on the key issues of Telstra, ethanol/biofuels, horticulture code of practice, Property Rights, US Free Trade Agreement, Medibank Private sale, cross media ownership, biosecurity, regional airport security, infrastructure development such as ten years delaying tactics for the Inland Rail project – the list goes on.

They seem to have the happy knack of being rolled in the joint party room on every issue that they promise to deliver on for country people. They are big when they’re out in the electorate but poodles when they are in Canberra,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor believes that the Nationals’ policy mix has been the major cause of the loss of one seat west of the range.

“The Nationals’ policy mix has seen the now lost seat of Gwydir experience the greatest loss of population of any region in Australia and the former seat of Parkes, another Nationals seat, had the second greatest loss of population - hardly ringing endorsements for a party purporting to represent country interests.

I will be doing all I can to encourage Independent candidates to have a go and prevent further loss of country seats and country people.

The Independent Candidates Advisory Network (ICAN) and website is up and running on www.icanonline.net.au and for country people, the window of opportunity is opening.

The Nationals record is damning and reason enough to vote them out and put true representatives in their place.

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It is time for country communities to elect local champions rather than loyal lapdogs whose allegiance is to city interests,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor believed that Nationals’ John Cobb, currently the Member for Parkes, was extremely vulnerable particularly given recent polling with the Dubbo area that indicated a dislike for his style of representation.

“I reiterate the fact that country people have 30% of the vote which has the capacity, if used correctly, to change the face of politics in Australia rather than continually being dictated to by faceless masters.

This opportunity to change the face of country representation in New South Wales in the Federal Parliament does not occur very often – it will be a challenge to country people to stand up or be ruled by city majorities.

If you always do what you’ve always done, then you’ll always get what you’ve always got!” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor said on a personal level, he was delighted with the inclusion of the Liverpool Plains Shire in the New England electorate.

“My great grandfather was the first mayor of Quirindi and both sides of my family have lived in the district for 130 years.

It would be a great honour to be given the opportunity to stand for the seat at the next election,” Mr Windsor said.