



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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# Constitutional change would bring better deal to country Australians

Constitutional change to abolish State Governments and recognise broader regional governments would bring a better deal for country Australians according to the Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor.

Mr Windsor raised the issue during his presentation of the Earle Page College Political Lecture at the University of New England on Wednesday evening.

Mr Windsor chose the topic "Country Independence – the way forward".

"Greater independence from capital cities through the abolition of the States and recognising regional government with a clear financial structure and access to income growth in their place would bring far better results for country Australians.

Our initial constitution was devised over 100 years ago to meet the needs of our fledgling nation back then bringing together the colonies or States as a Federation of States.

We have come along way since then and we need to review our constitution to better reflect the current times and needs of all Australians," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor also spoke about the need for independence of the country vote.

"The country vote which makes up approximately 30% of the total vote needs to become unaligned to any of the major parties.

Country people need to realise that if they banded together in a block, they would be the 'biggest minority in town' and have a much greater influence on policy decisions that affect them.

Country people, regardless of whether they are employers or employees, farmers or factory workers, professional or unskilled people all need health services, education, telecommunication services, infrastructure and other services.

If all in the country realised their political power by having parliamentary representatives who were not bound to one side or other of the two-party system then I'm sure country people would see a lot more than trinkets dangled in front of them each time an election comes around," Mr Windsor said.

**Mr Windsor's speech will be uploaded onto his website in the near future and invites debate on the issues raised.**