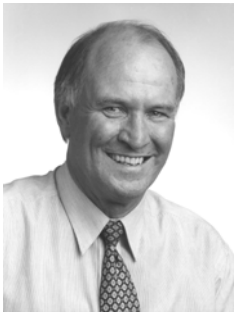

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Media Release

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Four Year Fixed Term of Parliament long overdue

As each Federal election year comes around, the practice of the Prime Minister having the power to keep the election date to himself until he feels the time is politically right to call it should be changed according to the Independent Member for New England Tony Windsor.

Mr Windsor believes that the current practice causes more uncertainty and instability across the broader community than having a fixed date every four years to go to the polls.

"I support a four year fixed term Federal Parliament.

Many people have let me know their feelings on this issue and are quite frankly jack of the phoney electioneering going on for virtually the last twelve months of the three year election cycle.

It is difficult for people to plan for their business and private lives as they don't know when the election date is.

Businesses go into a hold pattern – will they expand their workforce, will they enter into purchase agreements or finance agreements for new equipment or even plan for their holidays.

All are important to people's daily lives and they should not be treated as non-entities by Prime Minister's of either political persuasion for their own political needs," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor was one of the Independent Members of the NSW Parliament which in 1991 reformed the NSW Parliament's election cycle to fixed four year terms with the election to be held on the fourth Saturday in March every four years and believes that this reform has provided better outcomes for the people of NSW.

"I was one of the Independents holding the balance of power in 1991 when we made it a condition of supporting the Greiner Government that NSW Parliaments sit for a four year fixed term.

It allows people to plan ahead. It doesn't interfere with other activities and the community can function in an organised fashion rather than the circus we now see.

The Electoral Commission can book schools or halls well in advance so that people don't get confused with changes to venues from election to election and workers, both volunteers and paid officials know when their services are needed.

Reforming our Federal Parliament to four year fixed terms is long overdue and it is something that I will push for for future Federal elections," Mr Windsor said.