



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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MEDIA RELEASE

8 November 2007

Windsor wins top MP Award for second time

The community advocate organisation FairGO has awarded its "Best MP", for the second time in a row, to the Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor.

Mr Windsor was announced today as the most helpful Federal Member of Parliament in responding to a wide range of issues which had been forwarded by the FairGO organisation on behalf of concerned citizens to every MP in Australia during the last Parliamentary term.

Mr Windsor is honoured to have achieved this award for the second time, expressing again that it was very important that individuals in the community should have the right to be heard by their elected representatives in relation to issues of concern.

"I would like to thank my staff for their diligence and hard work in assisting me in my role as the Member for New England and I commend FairGO Director, Greg Bloomfield, for his ongoing efforts over the past 21 years to help bring the community's concerns to the attention of Parliamentarians across Australia," Mr Windsor said.

The following is a transcript of a media release issued by FairGO

MEDIA RELEASE

8th November 2007

Further information from FairGO Director
Greg Bloomfield on 02 9988 3312

ANNOUNCING

Star Performing Federal Politicians 2004 - 2007

Before every federal election since the early 90's, politically independent community advocate FairGO has assessed the performance of each member of parliament since the previous election. This gauges real, tough, performance over a three year period, not the six week hype of pre-election "promises".

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It rates MPs on how well they respond to voters' queries, complaints and issues. FairGO can compare all politicians equally because, for 21 years it has enabled voters to communicate simultaneously with all politicians by Votergram. So when a voter seeks help or a change in policy, every politician has an equal chance of assisting.

FairGO advocates "Value based voting". That is, voting with the objective of gaining maximum value for the voters from the hundreds of politicians they elect. This differs from the old method of people voting for their favourite party or leader, regardless of performance by individual MPs. FairGO claims that just voting for parties or leaders encourages "democratic dictatorship" where one party boss or leader alone virtually rules parliament. Most of the other 200 politicians don't count.

This FairGO assessment of Star Political Performers respects and highlights the importance of every local representative and senator in our democratic government being a good performer for the people.

Some elected politicians are outstandingly good at helping voters get the democracy they want. Others are not interested or are too lazy to even consider the views of Australians outside their own electorates, though they are very happy to listen to political donors, lobbyists and powerful vested interests from outside their electorates.

The range of issues covered by voters is detailed later.

HERE ARE THE NAMES OF THE STAR FEDERAL POLITICAL PERFORMERS DURING THE LAST PARLIAMENTARY TERM OF OFFICE FROM 2004 TO 2007:-

Overall winner, Star Political Performer of the whole federal Parliament, for the **second time running**, is **New England Independent Mr. Tony Windsor**, who was twice as responsive as the next best MPs. Mr. Windsor's willingness to address issues raised by voters from all over Australia and make government ministers accountable for their actions on those issues was outstanding, according to FairGO Director, Mr. Greg Bloomfield.

"Again and again Mr. Windsor has taken up voters views and queries with federal and state ministers, seeking explanations and changes", said Mr. Bloomfield. "Mr. Windsor has taken up causes and given voters a real voice from his seat in Parliament. He has particularly assisted voters who have raised with him questions on child care funding, alcohol health labelling, road safety, citizenship, parenting, debt forgiveness for African nations, fuel prices, migration and refugees, appropriate anti-terror laws and a fair trial for David Hicks. He has helped those wanting better rail transport, funding for autistic children, maximum benefits for Australia out of the US Free Trade Agreement and better protection from crime. Mr. Windsor is a unique politician, the dream of all who believe in democracy as "government of the people, by the people, for the people". He works very hard to do his duty for the people of Australia. FairGO salutes this superb effort, now covering a six year period in parliament."

Runner up with a very creditable performance herself, was **Australian Democrats leader Sen. Lyn Allison**. Voters from all over the country have valued her assistance on many issues, particularly mental health, refugees and migration, parenting, child care funding, alcohol labelling, the environment, debt forgiveness, anti-terror laws and fair trial for David Hicks. A very consistent advocate for voters, Sen. Allison has risen from 4th best Political Performer in the 2004 ratings to 2nd place in 2007.

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Third placed performer out of the 200 plus federal politicians, was another **Australian Democrat, Sen. Natasha Stott Despoja**, squeezed out of the second place she held in 2004, by her colleague and leader, Sen. Allison. Sen. Stott Despoja became a mother during this parliamentary term and will retire next June to devote more time to her family, so a move into 3rd place in 2007 is perhaps understandable.

Following Mr. Windsor as **second and third best Star Political Performers in the Federal House of Representatives** were Ms. **Tanya Plibersek** (Labor) 2nd, just ahead of her leader Mr. Kevin Rudd in 3rd place out of 147 MPs.

Third best out of the 76 senators, following Senators Allison and Stott Despoja was **Greens Leader Sen. Bob Brown**.

Three other senators put in significant performances helping voters. They were Senators Humphries and Payne (Liberal) and Senator Moore (Labor).

In the House of Representatives Liberal Defence Minister Dr. Brendan Nelson showed interest in some issues, mainly touching his portfolio or electorate.

Other Members of Parliament who responded well for Australian voters everywhere were, in alphabetical order:-

Hon. Tony Abbott (Lib)
Hon. John Anderson (Nats)
Late Mr. Peter Andren (Ind)
Hon. Kevin Andrews (Lib)
Hon Bob Baldwin (Lib)
Mr. Andrew Bartlett (Dem)
Hon. Bruce Bilson (Lib)
Hon. Julie Bishop (Lib)
Mr. Russell Broadbent (Lib)
Hon. Mal Brough (Lib)
Hon. John Cobb (Nats)
Hon Peter Costello (Lib)
Hon. Alexander Downer (Lib)
Hon Peter Dutton (Lib)
Sen. Hon John Faulkner (ALP)
Mr. Martin Ferguson (ALP)
Sen. Steve Fielding (Fam)
Sen. Concetta Fierravanti-Wells (Lib)
Ms. Jennie George (ALP)
Mr. Petro Georgiou (Lib)
Mr. Steve Gibbons (ALP)
Ms. Julia Gillard (ALP)
Hon. Greg Hunt (Lib)
Dr. Dennis Jensen (Lib)
Sen Barnaby Joyce (Nats)
Sen. Ross Lightfoot (Lib)
Mr. Peter Lindsay (Lib)
Mrs. Louise Markus (Lib)
Sen. Jan McLucas (ALP)

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Sen. Brett Mason (Lib)
Sen Christine Milne (Grn)
Hon. Judith Moylan (Lib)
Sen. Fiona Nash (Nats)
Sen. Stephen Parry (Lib)
Sen. Hon. Kay Patterson (Lib)
Hon Chris Pyne (Lib)
Mr. Kym Richardson (Lib)
Hon Philip Ruddock (Lib)
Mr. Ken Ticehurst (Lib)
Hon. Malcolm Turnbull (Lib)
Hon Mark Vaile (Nats)
Mr. Ross Vasta (Lib)

These are the 50 most responsive Members of Federal Parliament when it comes to ordinary voters living anywhere in Australia.

Although elected and paid by the Australian people as a whole, many of the remaining federal MPs were not interested in ideas, issues or complaints raised by anyone who did not vote for them, act as a paid lobbyist or donate to them or their party.

The issues raised by Australian voters through FairGO's Votergrams over the 4 year period were :-

- Affordable housing
- African nation debt forgiveness
- Appropriate health warnings on alcohol containers
- Autism specific pre-school funding
- Australian Government corporation bribes to Saddam Hussein's administration
- BCOF veterans entitlements
- Hospital care and safety crisis
- Child care and pre-school funding
- Citizenship
- Crime prevention
- Disability services
- Domestic violence
- False information circulated to doctors and patients by government authorities and refusal to correct same.
- Fair trial for David Hicks
- Family law reform
- Fuel prices, fuel taxes and price rise since the Iraq invasion
- Iraq invasion, war and death toll
- Media that is honest and balanced in reporting
- Mental health services failing to provide necessary care.
- Migration and fair treatment of genuine refugees
- MPs' resources for servicing voters
- Overseas disaster aid
- Parenting
- Political influence that is kept secret
- Public transport
- Preserving remnant urban bushland

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- Rail favoured over road freight
- Rural broadband services
- Road safety
- Same sex marriage
- Anti-Terror Laws
- U.S. Free Trade Agreement
- Young people imprisoned in aged care nursing homes

END

For further information please contact Greg Bloomfield, National Director, FairGO in Sydney on 02 9988 3312 or less effectively, on 0428 417 496.