



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Windsor disappointed at Minister's CDMA shutdown decision **Last pressure point on Telstra now gone**

The Independent Member for New England Tony Windsor has expressed his disappointment with the decision by the Minister for Broadband, Communication and the Digital Economy, Senator the Hon Stephen Conroy to allow Telstra to shut down its CDMA mobile phone network on April 28.

Mr Windsor had passed on interim results of a survey of people in the New England Electorate to the Minister prior to his announcement which clearly showed that equivalence of service has not been achieved and therefore Telstra should not be allowed to shutdown the CDMA network.

"I am disappointed that Minister Conroy is going to allow Telstra to shut down the CDMA network when feedback from people in the New England electorate is telling me and him that the NextG mobile phone service is not equivalent to the CDMA network.

That was the undertaking freely given by Telstra when they announced the NextG network would be replacing the CDMA network and the evidence from people using the system indicates that this has not been achieved yet," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor believes that the Minister's decision now removes any real control over Telstra delivering equity of service to country people and blames the decision of the former Government to fully sell off Telstra for the current situation.

"The Government has now lost its political leverage over the fully privatised Telstra.

Telstra is now only answerable to its shareholders and will be driven by profits and dividends back to its shareholders – not to deliver services to people in areas where it will actually cost them money to do so.

The writing was on the wall when the previous Coalition Government used its numbers in the Senate to sell off Telstra aided and abetted by the National Farmers Federation under the guise that they had received guarantees from the Coalition Government that equity of access to phone and broadband for country people would be enshrined in the legislation.

Well nothing was enshrined in the legislation and we now have the NSW Farmers Association that was a party to the National Farmers Federation decision to support the full sale of Telstra now complaining about the lack of mobile phone service to its members.

You can't blame the cow for getting out when you open the gate for it," Mr Windsor said.

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