

# Our Place - Hobart

## Open letter to the Liberal Members of Tasmania's next Parliament

by email: [secretariat@tas.liberal.org.au](mailto:secretariat@tas.liberal.org.au)

Dear Members

This communication follows your election to the Tasmanian House of Assembly, with representation in all electorates.

Here at *Our Place* we have been very concerned about your proposal for a new stadium at Macquarie Point. We canvassed the opinions of candidates state-wide prior to the election asking, if elected, would they vote for the use of public funds (costing \$ hundreds of millions) for construction of a new stadium for AFL in Tasmania. We publicised their responses to our supporters with scorecards for each electorate. We are pleased that over 60% of primary votes were garnered by candidates who took a stand against the stadium. That is consistent with our polling and polling by the tourism lobby last year. And this was despite the release of Foundation Membership for the team five days before the election. It proves Tasmania wants an AFL team, but not a stadium.

Since the Premier's announcement for a new stadium was made, we have interrogated every aspect of the proposal and concluded that:

- A third playing ground is not needed and any funding to the AFL should be spent building a local team from the grass-roots level, while games are played at two existing, perfectly adequate facilities that could be upgraded at a fraction of the cost;
- Spending up to \$2billion is just profligate and will place an unaffordable burden on future generations of Tasmanians – the funding agreement places all the risks on the State while all rewards benefit the AFL, media and gambling corporations. The Government's own cost-benefit analysis, conducted by MI Global, showed that there will be substantial losses over the decade, even in the best-case scenario;
- There is no social licence for this proposal to proceed – Tasmanians weren't asked if we wanted a third AFL ground and the lack of transparency, with secret deals signed behind closed doors and without reference to Cabinet or even Treasury, has alienated many Tasmanians from their neighbours and caused a loss of faith in the government's capacity to steer us through the precarious economic times ahead (as evidenced by the 12% swing against you); and
- Macquarie Point is the wrong location – a structure that meets the stated specifications simply won't fit on-site, and the geo-engineering needed to support such a heavy building on unstable land was not costed prior to signing the contract.

You called the election to bring stability to parliament, to put an end to the chaos that has plagued the past few years and worked against the best interests of Tasmania.

Much of that chaos derived from the Premier's contract with the AFL for a stadium at Macquarie Point tied to a team, and was only exacerbated as the campaign unfolded and more was revealed about the lack of transparency surrounding the contract, the lack of planning in selecting the wrong site, and the previous Government's unfunded commitments in an economic environment of rapidly increasing annual deficits and ballooning State debt.

We now ask that you fully reconsider your position in light of the financial data that you released shortly before the election.

We sincerely hope that you will endeavour to place all Tasmanians uppermost in your minds as you enter the new Parliament. It's time to 'read the room' and recognise that the majority of successful candidates expressed concern over the redistribution of funds from the State's primary responsibilities of health, housing and education to a project that will only plunge us further into debt.

We look forward to you promptly reconsidering your position to see this deeply flawed proposal expunged from the new

Yours faithfully



Roland Browne  
10 April 2024