

Will Hodgman MP
Leader of the State Opposition
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Labor won't rule out watering down Upper House powers

Deputy Premier, Lara Giddings, has refused in State Parliament today to rule out the Labor Party watering down the powers of Tasmania's Legislative Council.

This follows recent indications by Labor that it is eyeing a take-over of local government, through the introduction of compulsory voting and the standing of endorsed Labor candidates in this non-constituted sector of government.

Ms Giddings was questioned in Parliament about the State Labor Government's designs on the Upper House after former Labor Premier, Doug Lowe, last publicly warned Premier David Bartlett about the strong powers of the Legislative Council and said that one of the greatest problems that Mr Bartlett may face while in power was the "hard hand of the Legislative Council."

Furthermore, the Tasmanian Labor Party Platform states that the Legislative Council needs to be reformed and that Labor will "begin the process of reform for the Legislative Council if Labor wins government at the next election."

Ms Giddings refused to elaborate on what this process of reform would entail and would not rule out Labor watering down the powers of the Upper House.

Mr Hodgman said the Premier, David Bartlett, must immediately clarify the situation.

"If Mr Bartlett cannot rule out that his government will not water down the powers of the Upper House now, or after the next election, then Tasmanians will rightly start to wonder whether he is in fact more control freak than democratist."

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