



*media release*

Tasmanian Liberals

## **Will Hodgman MP**

Leader of the Opposition

Friday August 1, 2008

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### ***Liberals won't budge on anti-corruption commission***

Leader of the Opposition, Will Hodgman, said that the State Liberals will not budge on calling for an independent ethics commission that has the power to independently investigate accusations of government corruption and maladministration.

Mr Hodgman made the comments today as he lodged a submission on behalf of the Parliamentary Liberal Party to the Joint Select Committee on Ethical Conduct.

Mr Hodgman said that Tasmania must have an independent ethics body that can restore community confidence in the standard of governance in Tasmania.

“The State Liberals have been calling for the establishment of an independent anti-corruption and ethics commission for years. Make no mistake, the Government does not want this, and it is only because of sustained pressure from the State Liberals and the community that the Labor Party has even agreed to a Joint Select Committee on Ethical Conduct being formed.

“We must have an effective, independent and properly resourced commission with the power to initiate its own investigations, and I look forward to putting that view to the Joint Select Committee, via my submission and when appearing before the Committee in due course.

“Queensland, Western Australia and New South Wales all have independent anti-corruption commissions. In fact, the Labor Premier of New South Wales, Morris

lemma said last year that ‘...any jurisdiction that doesn’t have its own ICAC-style body is just crazy’.

“It’s sad that it has come to this, but Tasmanians just can’t trust this Labor Government.

“Over the last ten years we’ve seen:

- former Deputy Premier, Bryan Green, charged over serious issues relating to his dealings with a company run by Labor mates. He was neither acquitted nor convicted, but the matter ran for months and damaged the good name of Tasmania;
- former Premier, Paul Lennon, named as an unfavourable witness by the Director of Public Prosecutions in a criminal trial;
- the next Deputy Premier, Steve Kons, forced to resign because he misled Parliament about the appointment of a magistrate, raising grave concerns about political interference in the appointment of judicial officers;
- allegations that the former Premier tried to influence the independent pulp mill assessment process never investigated because the then Attorney-General refused to allow the allegations to be investigated;
- the former Premier accept hospitality from a casino days before granting the owners of that casino a gambling licence; and
- the former Premier intervening to grant the disgraced former Governor, and Labor mate, Richard Butler, an ex gratia payment of \$650,000, even though there was absolutely no need to make that payment.

“It’s Labor’s hall of shame, and because of the fact that they have done precious little while in government, it will be the legacy of this dodgy, disgraced and directionless government,” Mr Hodgman said.

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