



Media Release

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Time to end TasWater uncertainty

TasWater's owners have called for the Government to immediately bring on the TasWater takeover legislation and end the uncertainty for the Corporation's employees, owner councils and its customers.

Chief Owner's Representative, Northern Midlands Mayor David Downie, said the farce had gone on long enough and the issue thoroughly debated.

Cr Downie said while the Government had failed to make its case for the takeover, its flawed legislation had passed through the House of Assembly. The Government should immediately put it to the test in Legislative Council and remove all doubt.

"This uncertainty cannot go on. The public must be heartily sick of the debate and the 800 plus families of TasWater's dedicated employees certainly hope the whole saga will end.

"It is unfair to prolong the doubt for customers and employees," Cr Downie said.

"All sides have had the opportunity to put their views to the Legislative Council Select Committee and the main players have presented to the full Council.

"The overwhelming majority of owner councils are strongly opposed to the proposed takeover and electors in the recent Pembroke bi-election were quite clear in their rejection of the Government's plan, with anti-takeover candidates securing approximately 70 percent of the vote.

"I understand the Select Committee will hand down its report next week and the Government must then bring on the legislation as a matter of urgency, so the Upper House can vote on it."

Cr Downie said he was concerned at suggestions that the Government may decide not to bring on the legislation until after the State Election, for fear of now losing the vote in the Legislative Council.

As the makeup of the Legislative Council will not change, neither will the likely legislative outcome in six months' time.

"It would only result in another six months of unnecessary hostile, negative campaigning by the Government that is simply unfair to TasWater's employees.

"Despite all the rhetoric from Treasurer Peter Gutwein and his colleagues in Government, the takeover plan is based on bad policy, poor planning, unnecessary borrowings and flawed legislation.

"It will likely render TasWater unsustainable and a burden on Tasmanian taxpayers, and without doubt, result in higher water and sewerage charges for Tasmanians," Cr Downie said.

"The time to end it is now!"

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For further comment contact Mayor David Downie, telephone 0418 132 041