

A Charter of Human Rights

A Charter of Human Rights will protect basic human rights and fundamental freedoms. Australia is the only industrialized country in the world that does not have a national Bill or Charter of Rights and in Australia, only two jurisdictions, Victoria and the ACT, have enacted Human Rights Acts. More recently, the Tasmanian Law Reform Institute recommended that a Charter of Human Rights be enacted to enhance human rights protection in Tasmania.

Will you commit to implementing the recommendations of the Tasmanian Law Reform Institute and introduce draft legislation to enact a Charter of Human Rights?

Youth Justice

More than two-thirds of Tasmania's youth justice budget is spent on detention. In recognition of the long-term harmful effects for both the young person and the community at large, the Department of Health and Human Services has recently undertaken a major review with the aim of reducing youth offending and re-offending, reducing the number of young people held in secure detention and providing recommendations that strengthen primary, secondary and tertiary intervention options.

Will you commit to implementing the recommendations of the DHHS 'A Continuum of Care' review?

What measures does your party see as important in reducing youth offending and re offending as well as reducing the number of young people held in detention?

Access to Justice

- Environmental Defenders Office

For almost 20 years, EDO Tasmania has received funding from the State and Federal Governments to uphold and promote environmental laws and deliver community education regarding environmental and planning issues. In December 2013, the Federal Government announced that Federal funding for Environmental Defenders Offices around Australia would be terminated. Federal funding represented 90% of core funding for EDO Tasmania - without an alternative source of core-funding, this important community service will be forced to close.

Will you commit to providing sufficient recurrent funding to allow EDO Tasmania to continue to operate for the term of your government?

- Legal Assistance Services

Legal assistance services including Legal Aid, Community Legal Centres and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander legal services are at crisis point. Services were already stretched with commonwealth funding having been cut by 22% in real terms since 1997. More recently, in December 2013 the Commonwealth Government announced cuts of \$43.1 million from legal assistance services over the next four years including \$19.6 from the community legal centre sector, \$6.5 million from Legal Aid Commissions, \$13.3 million from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services and \$3.66 million from Family Violence Prevention Legal Services.

Will you commit to providing at least the same level of State funding, to legal assistance services¹ for the term of your government, that current service agreements provide for?

If you are unable to commit the same level of funding, what areas of legal assistance funding are at risk?

¹ For this question, legal assistance services are not defined as including the Environmental Defenders Office. Please see specific EDO question above.

- Solicitors' Guarantee Fund

The Solicitors' Guarantee Fund is established under the *Legal Profession Act 2007* (Tas) as a means of providing a means to compensate clients of solicitors whose funds are misappropriated. The Fund is maintained at a level of \$3.5 million to ensure that legal or other expenses incurred in the administration of the fund can be paid. In those years in which there is a surplus, the Minister will invite organisations to apply for a grant of money from the Fund, including the Law Foundation of Tasmania, the Legal Aid Commission of Tasmania or "such other legal assistance scheme as the Minister may approve". In recent years community legal centres have been successful in their application for grants of money.

Will you continue to invite community legal centres to apply for a grant of money from the Solicitors' Guarantee Fund?

Procedural Fairness for Housing Tasmania Tenants

Tenants should be provided with reasons for their proposed eviction and a right to challenge the reasons. Housing Tasmania policy formerly recognised the principal of procedural fairness so that all public housing tenants who were alleged to have breached their lease would be provided with details of the alleged breach and an internal right of review. Recently, the policy has been amended so that they are no longer required to apply the principle of procedural fairness.

Will your party commit to amending Housing Tasmania's policy so that tenants are only evicted after being informed in writing of details concerning their alleged breach and provided with an internal right of review.

Family Violence

The *Family Violence Act 2004* (Tas) is scheduled to be reviewed in 2014. Violence against women in our community is still prevalent, with more than one woman killed by a partner in Australia each week. While the *Family Violence Act 2004* (Tas) provides important protections to victims of family violence, there is much more to be done.

Will you commit to undertaking the review of the Family Violence Act 2004 (Tas), and drafting, funding and implementing any recommended amendments to the Act?

There is a severe lack of perpetrator programs for both male and female perpetrators of family violence.

Will you commit to providing appropriate levels of ongoing funding to establish gender specific perpetrator programs?