

Dean Harriss MLC

Independent Member for Huon



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MEDIA RELEASE

Harriss: Cost of Living the big issue in Huon

Independent Member for Huon Dean Harriss says his re-election campaign has reinforced the message from voters that the issues of most concern to them are cost of living, access to health care, housing and public transport.

“I’ve lived in the Huon all my life. This community is my family’s home, and it’s been a privilege to represent Huon in Parliament,” Mr Harriss said.

“My priorities are the community’s priorities. They stop me in the street or at the footy and talk about the cost of living, having to wait weeks for a GP, being unable to find a house they can afford, how the fuel crisis is really hurting them, or their concerns over making sure their kids have an education that will stand them in good stead in a changing world.”

Mr Harriss said his approach in parliament was straightforward.

“With the exception of an 18-month period before I was elected, Huon has been an independent stronghold for decades. I am and will remain resolutely independent. That means I run every decision through one test: is this good for Huon? I can then judge each issue on its merits. I stand by my record, including my vote for the stadium, though I acknowledge many do not agree.

“I bring the experience of 25 years on building sites and a lifetime in this community to the decisions I make in the upper house. That means listening first, thinking carefully, and being willing to stand up for what’s right.”

Mr Harriss pointed to his approach to the Greyhound Racing Prohibition Bill as an example of how he weighs up the decisions that come before the Legislative Council.

“This was an issue where reasonable people disagreed, and where the process was more troubling than the decision itself. The Premier wrote to the industry two days before the 2025 election promising to back every job in all three racing codes. Three weeks later, he announced a countdown to prohibition. The industry hadn’t changed. What changed was the arithmetic of minority government,” Mr Harriss said.

Mr Harriss said the Eslake report on the financing of greyhound racing made a compelling case that Tasmanian taxpayer support of the industry, at more than double the per-capita funding of any other jurisdiction, was delivering diminishing



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returns. Given the shocking state of the government books, and with strong public opposition to a continuation of funding, he was prepared to vote for the abolition Bill.

However, he said his support for the Bill was conditional on adequate compensation.

"The current offer on a per capita basis is less than half of the proposed compensation offered to the New Zealand industry following the decision to ban greyhound racing there.

"Tasmanians involved in greyhound racing were encouraged by the Government to invest and have confidence in the industry right up to the moment the Premier pulled the rug out from under them.

"If Parliament decides to support the industry shutdown, then compensation must be fair and reasonable to allow those affected to exit with dignity - which was the Premier's demand as the minimum standard when the forestry industry was restructured.

"That's how I'll be approaching every decision if re-elected. Reading the detail, listening to the people and judging each issue on its merits. That's what Huon deserves."

