



MEDIA RELEASE

ALL MAJOR PARTY CANDIDATES PLEDGE SUPPORT FOR THE PULP MILL

All candidates standing for the major parties at the state election have signed a statement supporting the construction of a pulp mill at Bell Bay, provided it meets the toughest environmental rules in the world.

In a joint initiative to protect the proposal from political manoeuvring, Timber Communities Australia and the Construction Forestry Mining and Energy Union challenged the candidates to sign the pledge.

TCA coordinator Barry Chipman and CFMEU state secretary Scott McLean said the signatures of all Labor and Liberal candidates standing in the state election have now been secured.

“It is important that voters know before they cast their ballot where each of the candidates stand,” Mr Chipman and Mr McLean said.

“We are pleased to advise that not one candidate hesitated in signing the pledge.

“And we will do everything within our power to make sure every one of them sticks to their word after the election,” they said.

Mr Chipman said the signed pledges do not lessen the need for Tasmanians to elect a majority government.

“Past experience has taught us that only majority government delivers the certainty that regional communities require for business investment to happen.

“During past minority governments, Tasmania lost thousands of jobs, with business refusing to invest during these periods of political uncertainty.

“In the event of a hung parliament, regional communities will suffer because business will delay investment decisions until there is stable government,” Mr Chipman said.

Mr McLean said workers have painful memories of the effect minority government has on jobs.

“Academics sitting in ivory towers with secure incomes and nothing to lose might be turned on by another minority government experiment, but the battlers who always cop the brunt of an economic downturn are the ones who will get hurt,” Mr McLean said.

“We hope the pledge signed by the candidates will discourage the major parties from using the pulp mill as a political football.

“We are however realists. It will not stop some from shifting ground, if they see a political advantage in doing so.”

Mr McLean said the future of the mill should be decided by the independent Resource Planning and Development Commission.

“Through this communiqué, the major parties have expressed confidence in our planning processes and will therefore accept the umpire’s decision.

“It’s about time the Tasmanian Greens gave a similar undertaking. It is not good enough for them to threaten to take their bat and ball and go home, if they don’t agree with the outcome of what is the most rigorous examination of any industrial project in Australia,” Mr Mclean said.

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Key Points in the Candidates’ Statement.

We advocate the following principles:

1. Support the construction of a pulp mill at Bell Bay provided it meets the environmental standards set by the Tasmanian Government’s *Environmental Emission Limit Guidelines for any new bleached eucalypt Kraft pulp mill in Tasmania*.
2. Have full confidence that a mill complying with the emission guidelines will be safe for the environment and for people.
3. Have confidence in the Resource Planning and Development Commission, to fully assess and satisfy itself that the Integrated Impact Assessment will ensure that the Mill will meet the guidelines it has set to examine social economic and environmental impacts.
4. Oppose the dissemination of deceptive, dishonest or misleading material and will ensure that their public comment will be based upon accurate and honest information.
5. Note the Centre of Policy Studies at Monash University estimates that a pulp mill will generate an extra \$91 million a year in State and Commonwealth taxes.