

Media Release

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NEW LABOR MINISTER MUST KEEP ELECTION PROMISES - support to timber families

Timber Communities Australia welcomes the appointment of Bryan Green as the new Minister responsible for forestry.

His first task is to confirm Labor's election commitment via its forest policy to support forest worker families, regional communities and our sustainable forest industry.

"A key aspect of Labor's election policy is the new forest growth plan with the Government to work in partnership with the community, unions and industry to overcome the present impediments to job creation and investment." **Barry Chipman**, Tasmania State Manager of Timber Communities Australia said today.

Minister Bryan Green must also act to extend the 20 year Regional Forest Agreement that balances conservation and development.

By extending the RFA the new Forest Minister will greatly assist securing over 6,000 direct jobs as well as continuing to secure Tasmania's world class forest reserve system. It is in the interest of both environmentalists and timber families that the RFA is extended.

The new Labor Governments forest policy commitments to support regional communities as well as struggling forest contracting families severely impacted upon by global financial crisis, the high Australian dollar and the job destroying anti forestry campaign.

"With the closure of Burnie's paper mill, and uncertainty over FEA, TCA is very confident that Minister Green will move quickly to find a way forward and to correct the misinformation spread by the anti forestry activists."

"We need the Government to promote the fact that almost half our 3 million hectares of forest are reserved, and that Tasmania meets international, independent standards for sustainable forest management and environmental management."

"The election policy of both the Liberals and the ALP addresses immediate threats to timber communities, and is built upon bipartisan support for the RFA at both State and Federal levels."

"Minister Green has already made support with all elected members of both the major party's signing an election commitment to support the forest sector and its people."

This commitment to the balance achieved between conservation and working forests was also supported by 79% of the electorate.

"We ask Minister Green to reflect the will of the majority and to move the forest debate from the tired old rhetoric of the anti forestry activists to a vision of job creation based on new technology and world best forest management practices." Mr. Chipman concluded.

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For more information contact Barry on 03 6260 4442 or 0417 013 336