



Guy  
**Barnett** MP  
LIBERAL MEMBER FOR LYONS

# Forestry Plan will end subsidies and save jobs

*Forestry Op Ed – By Guy Barnett, Minister for Resources*

*Featured in the Sunday Examiner, 30 April 2017*

While the Forestry Debate Rages (Sunday April 23) it is important that debate is based on real facts, not on green propaganda or industry self-interest.

The Government's position is based on two very clear fundamentals. Firstly, we will not follow Labor's ongoing policy of taking \$25 million each year out of hospitals and schools to prop up Forestry Tasmania. Secondly, we continue to absolutely oppose the attempted lock up by Labor and the Greens of 356,000 hectares of previously harvested forestry areas.

Under current arrangements, Forestry Tasmania is obligated to harvest timber and sell it at a loss in order to meet contracts signed under previous governments. This is a ludicrous situation when there are previously harvested forestry zones available which are designated by the Parliament as future potential production zones and which can be harvested in a commercial manner.

All that the current Bill before Parliament is doing is allowing the harvest of timber from the area set aside by Parliament as a future 'wood bank' so that the taxpayer doesn't have to give Forestry Tasmania \$25 million a year (as Labor wants to keep doing).

It is nothing short of amazing that the Labor Party continues to support forest lock ups by opposing this Bill, despite having been decimated at the 2014 election in large part for their destruction of the forestry industry to pander to the Greens.

None of the land which is subject to the Bill has ever been afforded formal protection. It was proposed for future protection under the so-called peace deal, but the Legislative Council imposed pre-conditions which were never met and still could not be met today.

76 Emu Bay Road  
11 High Street  
Level 10, 15 Murray Street  
Public Buildings, 53 St John Street  
[www.guybarnett.com.au](http://www.guybarnett.com.au)

DELORAINÉ 7304  
NEW NORFOLK 7140  
HOBART 7000  
LAUNCESTON 7250  
[guy.barnett@parliament.tas.gov.au](mailto:guy.barnett@parliament.tas.gov.au)

Ph (03) 6701 2170  
Ph (03) 6701 2170  
Ph (03) 6165 7678  
Ph (03) 6777 1002  
Facebook @Guy Barnett

Tasmanian  
**Liberals**

Before any of that happened the Liberal Party took its objections to the job-destroying deal to the 2014 State election and Tasmanians voted overwhelmingly to rip it up.

In the wash-up of the election, the Parliament accepted Government legislation to tear up the Labor-Green deal and to put future reserve forests into the wood bank for future production.

The Board of Forestry Tasmania has told us that without this action losses could be up to \$24 million a year, with contracts extending out to 2027/28 – money that could be better spent of front line services in Tasmania.

Opposition to the Government's plans is coming from two main sources – those who want to return to the lock-ups underpinning the disastrous forestry deal, and the beneficiaries of the subsidies who have a commercial interest in ensuring they continue.

However, it would be wrong to believe the industry is opposed to the Bill. Supporters clearly outnumbered opponents at Legislative Council briefings.

Those backing the bills included Kelly Wilton from Support Tassie's Timber Industry, Mick Kelly from Kelly Gang Timbers at Mole Creek and Tony Stonjek from Launceston-based AKS Forest Solutions, as well as George Harris and Allan Duggan from the Huon Resource Development Group and Andrew Denman from the Tasmanian Special Timbers Alliance. Tony Stonjek advised that he was aware of at least 20 smaller mills who need wood, but can't get it under current arrangements.

All of those groups support the Bill because they know the Government's plan is the only plan which will end the subsidies, save jobs, and put the industry on a sustainable pathway.

---