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Tasmanian Government **Media Release**

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Guy Barnett, Attorney-General

Tasmanian Parliament to be recalled

Maintaining the integrity and community trust in Tasmania's justice system is of the utmost importance.

Attorney General, Guy Barnett, said the Tasmanian Parliament will be recalled on Tuesday, 12 December, to consider legislation to establish an inquiry into Justice Gregory Geason.

Justice Geason, a Judge of the Supreme Court of Tasmania, has been charged with one count of common assault and one count of emotional abuse. Justice Geason pleaded not guilty to the charges on Friday, 1 December, 2023.

"The Government has requested that the Governor recall Parliament on Tuesday, 12 December, 2023 to consider a Bill to establish a Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry, which will subsequently report to Parliament as to whether Justice Geason should, or should not, be suspended or removed from the office of Judge," the Attorney-General said.

"Under the *Supreme Court (Judges' Independence) Act 1857*, the Governor may only suspend or remove a judge from office on address from both Houses of Parliament.

"While Parliament is able to inform itself in the manner that it thinks fit, it is important to pass legislation to establish an independent Commission of Inquiry to inquire into the matter.

"I have also directed the Department of Justice to prepare a discussion paper on the merits of establishing a Judicial Review Commission in Tasmania, similar to that operating in other jurisdictions. This will also outline options for handling complaints and concerns about the conduct of judicial officers. The discussion paper will be released for public comment early in 2024.

"This will ensure that our State has an appropriate and best-practice model to deal with situations such as this, and I look forward to progressing this work as a matter of priority," Attorney General Barnett said.

Members of Parliament have been offered briefings on the proposed Bill and we will continue to work closely together to progress this important matter.