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Guy Barnett, Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier

Labor senators abandon Tasmania over RET legislation

Tasmanian Labor Senators and Opposition leader Bryan Green stand condemned by their silence over the Renewable Energy Target legislation which is due before the Senate this week.

Hundreds of Tasmanian jobs are at stake by Labor's refusal to support the inclusion of biomass and wood waste as renewable energy.

Bryan Green has given up thumping the table for Tasmanian workers and has meekly given in to the Greens over this issue. The Labor Senators are simply silent unrepresentative puppets.

The forest industry is vital for the Tasmanian economy and jobs and the Hodgman Liberal Government is rebuilding the industry after 4343 jobs were lost under the previous Labor-Green state government.

Respected German professor Andreas Rothe spent 6 months in Tasmania in 2013 examining the potential for renewable wood-waste fired power in Tasmania and found that more than 3.3 million tonnes of biomass could be sourced from sustainable forestry.

This has the potential to deliver a \$200 million boost to earnings, hundreds of new jobs, sustainable environmental benefits and a shot in the arm for many regional communities. The alternative is to leave this residue wasting on the forest floor.

This is a sensible, logical and sustainable industry for Tasmania and has widespread support. A recent survey by the Australian Forest Products Association found that in the seats of Braddon, Bass, Franklin and Lyons there was support or strong support for re-inclusion of wood waste in the RET from 67% of those surveyed.

Including forest residue in the RET is simply common sense but the Labor senators are too busy playing politics with a Greens veto process than fighting for Tasmanian jobs.

Tasmanian Labor Senators must do the right thing for Tasmania and support this sensible Liberal legislation and help get hundreds more Tasmanians back into work.

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