

July 2010

Dear Tasmanian ACL Supporter,

They used to say 'a week's a long time in politics'. Given recent events I think we can safely say 'a day's a long time in politics'. And I'm not just talking about the rise of Julia Gillard as Prime Minister. On Tuesday 22nd June, Tasmanian Attorney-General Lara Giddings announced her agenda for the forthcoming year.

In just one day, we had foisted on us a "socially progressive agenda" which includes a charter of human rights, surrogacy laws, voluntary euthanasia laws, and a review of the laws concerning prostitution. It is vital that Christians across Tasmania get engaged in these policy debates, for the sake of our neighbours – those who will be negatively impacted either directly or indirectly. Politics today touches on just about every area of life and community, and therefore at times political action is a necessary extension of demonstrating love for our neighbour.



Nick Overton
Tasmanian State Director

When it comes to euthanasia, we've got to act on behalf of the elderly, the disabled, the sick and the weak, whose lives would be put at stake from state-sanctioned laws allowing euthanasia. In terms of prostitution laws, we've got to stand up for the women and children who are abused and exploited every day. Children who will struggle to come to terms with their identity and surrogate mothers who will suffer emotional heartache from giving up the child to whom they've given birth, also need our voice.

We have questioned the Tasmanian Greens' influence on the Government's euthanasia stance given that what is supposedly meant to be a private member's bill on the issue was raised in the Attorney-General's Budget Reply speech – thereby appearing to give Government endorsement to legalising euthanasia. It was less than one year ago that this issue was overwhelmingly defeated, but of course they're placing their bets on the newly elected MPs.

At the recent 'Make It Count' with Premier David Bartlett and Opposition Leader Will Hodgman, the Premier gave a commitment that any review of laws concerning prostitution in Tasmania would include a careful look at the Swedish model, which aims to reduce demand by prosecuting the purchasers of sexual services, not the prostitutes. We are expecting that commitment to be honoured.

Some of these proposals initially involve reviews and community consultation, while others will be tabled as bills in the parliament directly. At the appropriate time, ACL will spearhead campaigns on each of these matters. It's anticipated that the first bill to be introduced over the next couple of months is a bill to legalise surrogacy. I ask that you pray and stay alert to what's happening, particularly over the coming twelve to eighteen months, as this onslaught if successful will have significant ramifications for life in Tasmania.

I mentioned in my last letter that I will be moving on from ACL. My last day on staff at ACL will be Friday 16th July, and my family and I leave for Vancouver, Canada on 27th July. I would like to take this final opportunity to sincerely thank you for your support and encouragement in my role as Tasmanian Director over the past five years. For me it's been a great privilege, and I thank you for getting involved and working with us to see Christian principles and ethics accepted and influencing the way we are governed in this state and nation. We are moving into a time in which positive Christian influence in our state and nation is needed like never before! At the right time, the right person will be appointed to continue in the role of Tasmanian Director, your prayers for this would also be appreciated.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nick Overton', written over a light blue background.

Nick Overton
Tasmanian Director

