



AASW
Australian Association
of Social Workers

Tasmanian Branch

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The Honourable Lara Giddings MP
Premier of Tasmania
Executive Building Level 11
15 Murray Street
HOBART TAS 7000
Email: lara.giddings@dpac.tas.gov.au

Dear Premier,

Policy Responses to assist AASW members in the March 2014 Tasmanian Election

The Tasmanian Branch Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) would like to ask specific policy questions of you and your Party on the eve of the upcoming Tasmanian election. We have chosen several policy areas which are key to the wellbeing of many Tasmanians or which affect the education and professional standing of social workers. Your responses will be circulated to our members to help them in their voting choice at the March election.

The AASW is the lead national body for Australian professional Social Workers and represents 7500 professionally educated social workers practicing across most significant health, welfare and related fields. The Association sets the benchmark for professional education and practice in social work and has a strong voice on matters of social inclusion, social justice, human rights and issues that impact upon the quality of life for all Australians.

1. Given that the number of child abuse reports continue to rise in Tasmania what policies does your Party have to address the support needed for vulnerable children and families in Tasmania?
2. What legislative reform does your Party support to enable the Commissioner for Children to be a true independent advocate for vulnerable children in Tasmania?
3. What priority will your Party put on implementing the recommendations of the report by Professor Marie Harries, the chair of the Legislative Amendment Review Committee that was consulting on advocacy services for children, and the roles and responsibilities of the Commissioner for Children?
4. What are your Party's commitments and strategies to improve housing supply, adequacy, and affordability?
5. What is your Party's policy on addressing issues of property damage to Housing Tasmania property by tenants?
6. Does your Party support the use of the Pontville Detention Centre for asylum seekers and what is your position on having children in facilities such as the Pontville Detention Centre?
7. What priority will your Party give to reducing the discrimination against same-sex partners in Tasmania?
8. What is your Party's position on addressing the social determinants of health in order to sustainably improve the health status of Tasmanians?

9. What is your Party's position on assisting palliative clients to make choices about the treatment they receive or to die with dignity?
10. What is your Party's policy and commitment to ensuring people with mental illness and their families have access to effective treatment and support; irrespective of where they live, and their level of disposable income?
11. What will be your Party's strategy for improving the dialogue with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community on issues of sacred sites, land hand back, and public access to land of Aboriginal significance?
12. What will your Party do to address the issue of the social work profession currently not being able to be included in the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (NRAS)?

Social workers are one of the largest allied health professions in the country and work with the most vulnerable and marginalised members of our communities; but to date professional social work has been excluded from government regulation and accreditation. Social work meets the six criteria for inclusion in NRAS, and in most first world countries social work is a registered health profession. The current self-regulation of the profession offers limited protection from rogue practitioners or redress for harmed clients, which should be a fundamental right.

We look forward to hearing your responses to these important social policy areas.

Yours sincerely



Allyson Smith

President

AASW Tasmanian Branch

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