

Labor Senators' Dissenting Report

1.1 Labor Senators reject the desperate tactics of a Government determined to distract the public from a budget that slugs working and middle class Australians whilst delivering tax cuts for the big end of town. The tabling of this report is a stunt from a desperate Government that dithered for two and a half years.

1.2 It is clear that the Broadcasting Legislation Amendment (Media Reform) Bill 2016 will not be considered by the Parliament before the Parliament is dissolved.

1.3 The fact that Prime Minister Turnbull and Minister Fifield waited two and a half years before proposing any reform to the regulatory structure governing media in Australia demonstrates that this is all about politics and not good public policy or the public interest.

1.4 Labor Senators have been given less than 48 hours to review the chair's report, which was not due to be tabled until May 12. We will not rush consideration of the arguments put forward by academics, media companies and everyday Australians. We will take time to review the evidence presented before determining our position on reforms.

1.5 Labor Senators are cognisant of the material impact that further delay to media reform will have on regional programming.

1.6 Labor has repeatedly indicated its predisposition to support the removal of the 75 per cent reach rule and Labor Senators wish to express our disappointment that the government has dithered and delayed this important reform.

1.7 The Government's inaction for two and a half years is squarely to blame for any negative impact on regional television viewers as a consequence of the 44th Parliament having no time left to consider this bill.

1.8 Furthermore, a Shorten Labor Government will undertake a more thorough and genuine consultation process with all interested stakeholders.

1.9 Labor Senators look forward to engaging in a genuine conversation about the future of our media industry in the early stages of the 45th Parliament.

Senator Anne Urquhart
Deputy Chair
Senator for Tasmania

Senator Jenny McAllister
Senator for New South Wales

