



MEDIA RELEASE

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SCRUTINY OF GOVERNMENT ENHANCED

Independent MLC for Murchison Ruth Forrest has successfully moved to establish two committees of the Legislative Council to undertake the important roles of timely scrutiny of Government Administration, Government Businesses and State Owned Companies, Government Authorities, Commissions and other entities.

“Parliamentary Committees have a vital role in the essential function of conducting in-depth reviews into specific matters, scrutinising government activity and the activity of Government Businesses. In undertaking this role, committees may call the Government or the public service to account for their actions and ask them to explain or justify administrative decisions or policy” Ms Forrest stated.

“Committees such as these form a vital link between the Parliament and the people and assist Members to access a wide range of community and expert views resulting in Parliament being better informed of community issues and attitudes’ Ms Forrest said.

“Government Businesses carry over half of the State Sector’s assets and over half of the State’s liabilities yet the Parliament only gets 2 to 3 hours once a year in December at GBE Scrutiny Committee hearings to ask questions of these GBEs” Ms Forrest said.

“At that stage some of the information is almost 18 months old, clearly an inadequate situation if one is interested in understanding what, where and how these entities are performing and what issues may be relevant” Ms Forrest stated.

“Areas of Government Administration should be and will be able to be scrutinised as necessary, including Government policy including Bills presented to Parliament seeking to implement Government policy” Ms Forrest said.

“Over the last two years, the Parliament has been called on to agree to major reforms in Post Year 10 education, approve the sale of TOTE, the purchase of Tas Railway and the purchase of the Aurora Energy Tamar Valley power station, with very little information in many cases particularly about the performance of these Businesses. We have also seen significant downgrades in profitability of several other Government Businesses, with very little explanation and limited Parliamentary scrutiny. This is inadequate and not in the interests of Tasmanians who have a vested interest in these Businesses” Ms Forrest said.

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For further information contact Ruth Forrest on 0419 879 524.