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22 April 2012

The Secretary,
Environment, Resources and Development Committee
Parliament House
Hobart TAS. 7000
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Dear Mr Casimaty

***Subject: Standing Committee on Environment, Resources and Development
– Tasmanian Hemp Industry Inquiry***

In response to the call from Mr Brenton Best MP, Chairperson of The House of Assembly Standing Committee on Environment, Resources and Development, I ask that this letter be considered a brief submission in response to the call for submissions into “the current state of Tasmania’s Hemp industry.”

(a) any matters impacting upon the production and value adding of industrial hemp in Tasmania:

The Hemp industry is constrained by the rules and regulations of government that are disincentives to its more widespread adoption.

It is therefore vitally important that the industry be given the same status as that afforded other cropping industries. In its development phase this needs to include assistance in areas of research, value adding and marketing.

While the growing of Hemp for fibre has been accepted the growing of Hemp for its seed production faces unfair limitations that need to be removed.

(b) identification of any commercial impediments, as well as any regulatory impediments at local, state or federal government level impacting upon the establishment, appropriate development and maintenance of a wider industrial hemp industry:

Of particular note is the banning of Hemp as a food in Australia. While this is a Federal government issue, since the decision-making authority that determines whether or not this remains the case is a Federally convened Committee, the State has a vital role to play as one of the voting members on the COAG Legislative and Governance Forum on Food Regulation.

I submit that the interests of the state of Tasmania will be better served when the government of the day declares its support for the Tasmanian growers, processors and product marketers. And that this support be demonstrated in tangible ways i.e. given the same encouragement and assistance provided to other primary industry groups within the Tasmanian rural community.

(c) any other issues incidental thereto:

It is not too late for the state and federal governments to put aside their differences and pool their resources in the interests of advancing the Hemp industry – in the national interest.

The current FSANZ assessment of Hemp as a food, has concluded there are no negative health implications.

Therefore an urgent convening of the COAG Legislative and Governance Forum on Food Regulation to approve the lifting of the ban of Hemp as a food, as recommended by FSANZ, would permit the planting of a 2012 Spring hemp crop.

Thank you for this opportunity to contribute to the *Tasmanian Hemp Industry Inquiry*.

Yours sincerely,

Stuart Carter

The Committee invites interested persons or organisations to make written submissions to the Committee, the closing date for which is Friday, 27 April 2012, by 5.00pm.