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Media Release

Treasurer's take on Commission report "breathtaking"

TasWater Chairman Miles Hampton says Treasurer Peter Gutwein's interpretation of the Productivity Commission's draft report on water reform is breathtaking in its ignorance of the facts and of its criticism of State Government policy.

Mr Hampton said the Treasurer was ignoring the Tasmanian Government's abandonment of economic reform in its TasWater takeover bid, as well as the fact that he intended to borrow more money to pay for his water and sewerage folly which Tasmanians would have to repay.

"If Mr Gutwein is successful, rather than the claimed savings for households of some \$550 over the next six years, Tasmanians will pay considerably more for a much longer period in unnecessary interest payments and pay-offs to councils.

"The Productivity Commission is an independent research and advisory body charged with helping governments make better policies that work in the best interest of the community and it has been severely critical of the State Government's move.

"The Productivity Commission is about good policy. Unfortunately, Mr Gutwein is not interested in good policy, but appears singularly intent on politicking and electioneering."

Mr Hampton said the Treasurer was quick to claim lower prices and faster infrastructure upgrades, but was yet to explain how he intended to deliver these.

"The fact is, the Government's plan is based on false promises, misleading claims and a lack of any coherent plan.

"He wants access to TasWater's balance sheet so that he can raid it as he has done to other Government Business Enterprises and this will cost Tasmanians dearly, either in the form of higher taxes and increased water and sewerage charges, or reduced resources for essential services.

"The draft report is a damning indictment of the Treasurer's approach."

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