



MEDIA STATEMENT

KEN TRAVERS MLC

Acting Shadow Minister for Agriculture,
Shadow Minister for Transport; Sport and Recreation; Electoral Affairs

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Door shut on anti-GM campaigners during Minister's US visit

Agriculture Minister Terry Redman has failed to meet with key opponents of genetically modified (GM) crops during his recent tour of the United States and Canada, Acting Shadow Agriculture Minister Ken Travers said today.

"In his statement released before his tour, he said he would be meeting with 'farmers and marketers of both GM and non-GM canola in Saskatchewan'," Mr Travers said.

"He has broken that promise."

Mr Travers said Shadow Agriculture Minister Mick Murray had received complaints from Canadian anti-GM crop farmers who were denied meetings with the Minister during his recent visit.

"At least two written invitations were extended to the Minister by the National Farmers Union to meet in person when he visited Saskatchewan but he could only agree to a phone conversation," he said.

"This does not constitute balanced fact finding, a promise made by Mr Redman.

"It is extraordinary for the Minister to spend thousands of dollars on an overseas visit and not hear all sides of the story."

Mr Travers said it appeared the Minister had focused on meeting with industry heavyweights instead of farmers' organisations.

"Mr Redman claimed he was going on a fact finding mission, but he seems to have met only with organisations who share his support for the GM crop trials," he said.

"He was offered a meeting with the Saskatchewan Organic Directorate and a farmer who was sued by Monsanto but he knocked it back.

"It is inexcusable that he can make decisions that affect farmers, neighbouring properties, organic farmers, trade relations and consumers without listening to all the evidence."

Mr Travers said the Minister had haphazardly entered into the trials without considering the long term effects on the industry.

"Mr Redman has gone ahead against the wishes of a majority of the State's farming community, food industry and a growing list of local governments," he said.

"The only view Mr Redman is interested in is his own.

"He has ignored a disallowance motion that passed in Parliament, he has ignored his own constituents, he has ignored the numerous protests on the front steps of Parliament House and now he has ignored the cries of anti-GM crop farmers in the US."

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