

19 December 2018

Doug Humphreys OAM
President
The Law Society of New South Wales
170 Phillip St
Sydney NSW 2000

By email: Doug.Humphreys@lawsociety.com.au

Dear Mr Humphreys

2019 State Election Platform

I write to inform you of my support for the 2019 State Election Platform of the Law Society of New South Wales (the Law Society).

Since my election as Member for Sydney, I have consistently supported strengthening human rights and access to justice and democracy, and opposed legislation and policies that aim to erode these rights, particularly laws that take an overly tough stance on law and order. My office regularly consults with the Law Society about legislation that is before parliament.

Better Resources for Courts and the Justice System

A fair and accessible justice system for all is the cornerstone of a strong and healthy democracy and I support the Law Society's policies to better resource the courts and the justice system. While my electorate is in the inner city, I share concern about access to justice in rural and regional areas and agree that more investment is needed in court and legal services across the state. I have pushed for harm minimisation policies that replace the criminal approach to drug use with one that is based on health and evidence and I strongly support the expansion of the drug court. I also campaigned against funding cuts to community legal centres and support increased funding in Legal Aid for private practitioners and in the legal assistance sector.

Promoting Investment and Business Innovation

I support most investment and business innovation policy platforms, particularly on the need for payroll tax reform to reduce disincentives to employment. I have argued for changes to payroll tax to support business growth including as part of the recent campaign that got the threshold lifted. While I agree that environmental planning legislation needs reform, the need to minimise delays must be balanced with a comprehensive assessment process that includes independent analysis and genuine community input to promote public benefit. I believe that development decisions are best made by democratically elected representatives over appointed officials.

Upholding the Rule Of Law

I support all of the Law Society's policy platform requests surrounding the rule of law, which would help improve the lives of some of the state's most vulnerable people, particularly with regard to insurance and compensation schemes and preventing elder abuse. Our privacy and information laws need significant reform to keep up with technological changes and recent legislative changes, and to improve public access to government information. I am especially concerned that freedom of information laws



continue to allow agencies to deny access to information that should be in the public realm.

I have a strong record of opposing laws that encroach on human rights and believe that the Parliament and therefore the wider community would benefit from a human rights act for New South Wales.

Reducing the Incarceration Rate

Urgent action is needed to reduce the state's high incarceration rates including among juveniles, women and Aboriginal people. In Parliament I have repeatedly called for expanded resources for prevention, early intervention, diversion, rehabilitation and community re-integration programs. We need better approaches that improve outcomes for offenders and the community and I support these Law Society's policy platforms. However I would need more information before supporting a complete restriction on parents and carers from making Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders against their children.

Indigenous Justice

Indigenous justice must be a priority for any future government. In Parliament I called for a Makarrata and Indigenous Voice to Parliament, and opposed the care and protection changes that will see more Aboriginal children permanently removed from their families. I support the Koori court, Indigenous justice targets and finding new community solutions through partnerships and am committed to working towards a more inclusive and just future.

In closing I would like to thank the Law Society for your help over the last four years providing valuable information on bills and government policies. If re-elected, I hope to continue working with your organisation to improve legal and justice systems in this state.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'AG', written in a cursive style.

Alex Greenwich
Member for Sydney