

11 MAR 2014

Mr Geoff Lewis  
General Manager  
Tasmanian Bus Association  
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Dear Mr Lewis,

Thank you for your letter to the Minister for Sustainable Transport, Craig Farrell MLC, dated 19 February and the copy of the Tasmanian Bus Association's policy document, *Moving People Tasmania*.

Labor acknowledges the importance of the issues which you have raised and I am pleased to respond to each of them on behalf of Tasmanian Labor.

***The creation of a central passenger transport authority.***

Labor notes, as per information provided in your letter, that the Tasmanian bus industry employs almost 800 people and operates 1000 buses. The private bus industry services 501 contracts and moves 30,000 students daily, while the Tasmanian Government-owned Metro Tasmania records over 10 million boardings each year. Therefore, Labor acknowledges that the role played by Government towards service operators should be the subject of ongoing review, especially in regard to how the model of governance can improve the provision of transport services.

***Future transport plan that includes improved services to rural and urban fringe areas and the adoption of agreed minimum service levels***

Delivering public and community transport to rural and regional communities is a particular challenge in Tasmania. Labor acknowledges the importance of future transport planning. Ensuring the future sustainability of Tasmania's land transport system to provide Tasmanian communities a

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viable and alternative travel choice to the car is a key priority for Labor. This government has developed the Tasmanian Urban Passenger Transport Framework which guides investment in sustainable transport. It covers six key action areas to improve the passenger transport system, to support a low-carbon future, as well as to enhance accessibility, liveability and health outcomes.

These action areas are: Moving Minds; Moving Places; Moving People; Moving Policies; Moving Legs; and Moving Forward. The Framework is a key output of the Tasmanian Infrastructure Strategy and builds on existing policies and plans across our passenger transport system. For example, we have helped fund a \$50,000 Cradle Coast Passenger Transport Network Plan aimed at boosting access to jobs, education and vital services in the north-west. The Plan will act as a road map to a joined-up, efficient and modern public transport network in the region.

Labor acknowledges that future transport planning must be real-world, customer focused and industry supported across the entire state, to act as a map for the provision of future transport needs. This will mean that passengers and our public and private operators are on the same page in terms of the priorities, needs and forwards steps in how we plan to improve public transport in the state.

#### ***Integrated network, ticketing and customer information between all operators, public and private***

Labor embraces the notion of an integrated ticketing network with customer information distributed between all operators, public and private. Labor will continue to invest to integrate ticketing and customer integration between all operators. That is why we have recently invested in enabling Metro and Tassielink to share usage of the Greencard.

#### ***Improved contract certainty beyond 2018***

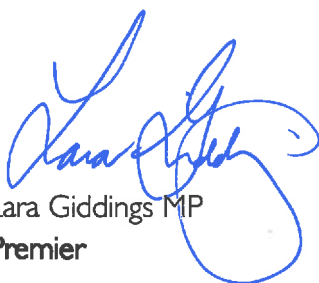
Having worked with and listened to the industry, Labor acknowledges the strength of argument for improved contract certainty, especially for incumbent private operators. We recognise that contractual uncertainty can be detrimental to ongoing investment in the industry and ensure that the right long-term contract regime is put in place for everyone's benefit. We will look to continue contracts if the operator has met a key number of performance indicators in its service.

#### ***Sustainable Transport Minister Portfolio***

Public transport is a vital community service. It links people to jobs, education and a host of important services. These are the practical opportunities that Labor is all about. The future directions of public transport in Tasmania are concerned with connecting Tasmanians to the things that matter in life – jobs, school, services, and each other. Labor sees the ongoing viability of the Tasmanian Bus Industry and the sustainable growth of associated businesses as fundamental to these endeavours and will ensure the Sustainable Transport Portfolio is retained.

Thank you again for your correspondence and may I also take this opportunity to thank you and your members for the important role you play in promoting the Tasmanian Bus Industry in partnership with Government.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lara Giddings', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Lara Giddings MP  
Premier