



**The Hon. Luke Foley MLC**  
Leader of the Opposition  
Shadow Minister for Infrastructure  
Shadow Minister for the Environment  
Shadow Minister for Western Sydney

20 March 2015

Mr Richard Denniss  
Executive Director  
The Australia Institute  
Unit 1, Level 5  
131 City Walk  
Canberra ACT 2601

Dear Mr Denniss

*Richard,*

Thank you for your letter regarding the accountability and transparency of lobbying in New South Wales.

I have taken a close personal interest in the regulation of lobbying activity in NSW. I have engaged in numerous interrogations, at Estimates hearings, of Premiers and Directors General of the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet concerning lobbyist regulation.

Matters raised by me resulted in the very first finding of a breach of the NSW Lobbyist Code of Conduct. Further matters raised by me at the most recent Estimates hearings are the subject of an ongoing investigation.

Labor in government implemented a number of improvements concerning lobbying in NSW, and if elected on March 28, we would build on these changes to the rules. The previous Labor Government introduced the Lobbyist Register, a Lobbyist Code of Conduct, and new guidelines for the Department of Planning staff.

The public deserves to know that MPs, who make decisions every day about the laws that govern our State, are not motivated by personal gain. That's why Labor has responded by committing to implement the highest integrity standards for MPs of any party anywhere in Australia.

In February 2013, Labor committed to requiring Ministers to publish a monthly online diary of all meetings, phone conversations or other interactions with lobbyists, private companies or MPs relating to commercial transactions or decisions.

A year later, the Baird Government also committed to release Ministerial diaries. However, their publication is quarterly, not monthly, and the disclosures contain the

barest of information. Labor will overhaul this process to deliver more open, honest and accountable government.

Under Labor's policy, diaries will be released monthly, and Ministers will be required to minute meetings and relevant phone calls, with all lobbying activities and documentation to be subject to the Government Information (Public Access) Act. This change is in line with previous recommendations from the Independent Commission Against Corruption.

The original Lobbyist Register and Code of Conduct which requires all paid third party lobbyists to disclose their full list of clients and declare their status as a lobbyist prior to meetings with Government will remain in place. The Lobbyist Register together with the 'Public Diaries' policy will deliver more open and transparent Government.

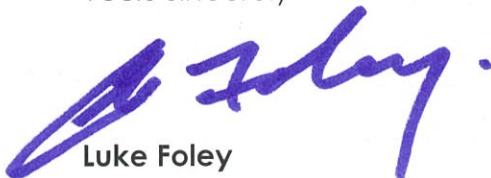
Labor's lobbying policy is just one part of strengthening Government accountability and transparency in this state. Labor has put forward a clear plan of reform with the public being given unprecedented access to MP's financial interests including their taxable income and details about the pecuniary interests belonging to spouses and family members.

This regime will be backed up by the toughest enforcement procedures in the country. We will appoint an Inspector General for Parliamentary Standards with unprecedented powers to investigate and penalise Members of Parliament who breach the Parliamentary Code of Conduct.

Protections for whistleblowers will also be strengthened and for the first time, employees in the private sector will receive the same protection as public servants.

While we have already adopted many of the recommendations of the ICAC *Investigation into the Corruption Risks of Lobbying 2010*, if elected to Government in March, we will consider further initiatives to deliver the honest, open and accountable Government that the people in this state deserve.

Yours Sincerely



**Luke Foley**  
**NSW Labor Leader**