The Australia Institute

Hon Campbell Newman
Premier of Queensland
E: thepremier@premiers.qld.gov.au
Cc: Bruce McIver, President (C/O emma.williams@lnp.org.au)

8 January 2015

Dear Premier Newman,

Research shows that transparency and accountability are essential to a healthy and robust democracy and a precondition for strong economic performance. The Australia Institute is supporting a conference featuring experts on these matters in Brisbane shortly after the election. In the meantime, the Institute is writing to you and other Queensland political leaders and parties to ascertain each party's stance on some fundamental democratic issues.

In particular, the Institute proposes to publish each party's attitude to a number of good governance principles derived from a paper presented by the Honourable Tony Fitzgerald AC, QC at the State Library of Queensland last year. We ask, does your party undertake to act in accordance with the following principles if successful at the upcoming election:

1. Govern for the peace, welfare and good government of the State;
2. Make all decisions and take all actions, including public appointments, in the public interest without regard to personal, party political or other immaterial considerations;
3. Treat all people equally without permitting any person or corporation special access or influence; and
4. Promptly and accurately inform the public of its reasons for all significant or potentially controversial decisions and actions.

We plan to publish an assessment of the responses or, if appropriate, to note that a party didn't respond. Given the upcoming state election date, your reply is respectfully requested by 10am, 19 January 2015.

If your party disagrees with any of the principles advanced by Mr Fitzgerald, it would be of value to voters and later the participants in the upcoming conference if you could explain your party's reasons for doing so.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Richard Denniss
Executive Director, The Australia Institute