



FAMILY FIRST PARTY

Email News—Third Edition—May 2008

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Positive Comments from Michael Atkinson, Attorney-General on 5AA (5AA 11.07-11.19) 10th April 08

(Byner: ... question though, on this increased sentences. We had an issue raised yesterday by a FAMILY FIRST Member in the Upper House.) Yeah, DENNIS HOOD. (Byner: Yeah, that three and a half kilos of marijuana ... how can you be running that stuff and hydroponic equipment and the whole box and dice ... and get a fine of \$250? Work that one out?) Well, it does seem very, very low and that's why last week I had a news conference in Parliament to announce what the Rann Government was doing on hydroponics and precursor chemicals and the range of sentences. I aim to work cooperatively with DENNIS HOOD to see that people who produce commercial quantities of cannabis, and normally they'll do that hydroponically, are appropriately punished. (Byner: ... but the thing that doesn't make sense to me about this is that for the offence committed ... there was already a fine, a maximum of two hundred thou and a jail sentence available. So, how do you have such a large quantity, a trafficable amount of that stuff in the District Court and get off with a \$250 fine ... when there are penalties for maximum. I mean, what do you need, a truck load? It just seems disproportionate ... ?) Well it is disproportionately low and I would like to see the sentencing remarks of that case and since I'm going to spend a lot of time with DENNIS HOOD over the next two weeks I imagine he will draw it to my attention by remember, although imprisonment is ... the first thing we think of regarding ... cultivating and selling commercial quantities of drugs, one of the greater deterrents ... is to take away the proceeds of the crime and ... to confiscate anything used in the production of the cannabis and that may involve confiscating the warehouse or the farm or the home where the marijuana was produced ... we do that and ... we do it so often that Hendrik Gout and the Independent Weekly was complaining about it and saying it was a scandal that people were having their property taken over ... by the Government because they were using their home to grow dope. Well ... I disagree entirely with Hendrik Gout. It is the best deterrent to confiscate the asset. (Byner: Is there potential for an appeal here by the DPP?) Yes, there's always potential to appeal within 21 days of the sentence coming down. (Byner: ... when DENNIS HOOD was on yesterday, I actually asked him about the sentencing remarks and he did say that he'd read them completely and there was nothing that seemed to be mitigating in what would lower what the tariffs are in a maximum sense ... whilst you mightn't expect the maximum because few crimes ever attract it, it just seems rather laughable that a person can have all the equipment and amounts that are trafficable quantities which means they're profiting from other people's misery ... and they come for this.) I share DENNIS HOOD's concern and that's why as part of the second phase of the bikie bill, we will be introducing a provision that says if a person is convicted of drug trafficking a third time, then we will Hoover up all their assets. We won't make an inquiry about whether that asset was used in the crime or not ... if a person is convicted three times of drug trafficking, we'll just take everything they own. (Byner: Michael, thanks for joining us.)

FAMILY FIRST says it's an ideal time for the Government to improve the state's rail network - ABC - Friday 2nd May

FAMILY FIRST MLC, DENNIS HOOD, says with the extreme petrol prices and current climate change issues it's an ideal time for the Government to improve the state's rail network. Mr Hood says his party's outlined its public transport plan, which includes the extension of Adelaide's rail network as far north as the Barossa. He says there are too many arguments for extending the network and not enough against it. Mr Hood says the proposal isn't asking for new train lines to be built, rather it's suggesting existing privately owned freight lines are better used:

(639ABC 6.30am/8.30am) "Our train service is there right now. Why shouldn't we be using it in the face of very high petrol prices? There are environmental concerns of course. Cars create greenhouse gas emissions and if people get onto the train and out of their cars and that will have a real benefit there as well - it's a real win win. And it can be done so at minimal cost because the line in the case of the Barossa Valley is already there."

(639ABC 7.30am) "It's cost effective, it's good for the environment to get people out of their cars and into public transport and it's.. the line is already there. This is the frustrating part, the line is actually there. It can be used and it should be used."

FAMILY FIRST Transport Policy—Submissions

The FAMILY FIRST parliamentarians are in the process of preparing a South Australian Transportation policy to address concerns such as the high price of fuel, global warming, and road safety. If you have any submissions to make regarding South Australian Transportation Infrastructure, please contact ANDREW EVANS's Policy Advisor, via email to nicholas.greer@parliament.sa.gov.au or by phone 8237 9279.

Mass Transit Initiative

FAMILY FIRST Parliamentary leader DENNIS HOOD today unveiled the party's vision for a high-speed mass transit system in Adelaide, with connecting services to other regional centres.

The FAMILY FIRST proposal would see:

Rail services re-extended from Gawler to the Barossa Valley, with an existing GWA freight line to be repurchased and converted for commuter and tourist use to Lyndoch, Tanunda, Nuriootpa and Angaston.

- ◆ The rebuilding of the Northfield Rail line to provide high-speed rail service to Pooraka, new Northfield sub-developments, Walkley Heights and Valley View, with major Park 'n' Ride stations to be built on Port Wakefield and Main North Roads.
- ◆ Track extensions to reinstate Bridgewater rail services and service the booming Mount Barker subdivisions, as well as Stirling, Aldgate, Balhannah, and Littlehampton.
- ◆ An extension of the Tonsley Rail line to provide high-speed rail to Flinders University and Medical Centre and Darlington, and then connect with elements of the now defunct old southern suburbs rail line to restore rail coverage to Sheidow Park, Reynella, Woodcroft, Morphett Vale, Hackham, and Huntfield Heights.
- ◆ Investigation into re-using the old Willunga line bridge to connect this line to Seaford and Aldinga at a cost saving of \$51.7 million, instead of a bridge from Noarlunga.
- ◆ The re-instatement of regular regional passenger rail services, including services to Murray Bridge, Victor Harbor, Whyalla, Mt Gambier and Broken Hill.
- ◆ Allowing two-way traffic on the Southern Expressway at off-peak times.
- ◆ "Adelaide needs a world class, high-speed, environmentally friendly mass transit system. Even better, we can build one cost effectively by re-using existing defunct and disused transport corridors. What use are more roads if no one can afford to drive on them? The people of South Australia are hurting with ever increasing petrol prices, and our environment is hurting too".

DETAILS UPDATE

We would like to keep you informed with Parliamentary updates and legislation challenges. If any of your contact details have changed, please notify us by phone on 8237 9122, or by email to office@sa.familyfirst.org.au or by filling in this form and returning it to: FAMILY FIRST Party, PO Box 420, Campbelltown, SA, 5074. **Thank you!**

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss/_____ First Name: _____ Surname: _____

Address: _____ Suburb: _____ P/Code: _____

Phone: _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

Constituents Come Out for Recent Public Meetings

ANDREW EVANS MLC has been touring the state recently informing constituents of Parliamentary developments and updates on pending bills.

Recent visits include Port Lincoln and Murray Bridge where many interested people turned out for the briefing and latest updates.

In the next couple of months, look out for a public meeting near you. There will be visits to such places as Ceduna, Port Augusta and Mt Gambier. For further details contact us on 8237 9122.

As well as these visits Andrew is keen to encourage other FAMILY FIRST members and constituents around the country and has recently visited Perth, whilst not forgetting the home front, holding meetings earlier in the year in the Sturt, Wakefield and Makin Electorates. Most recently, some of our constituents would recall, the meeting in Port Adelaide/Hindmarsh Electorate which had a temporary glitch with the hall booking! A big 'thank you' to everyone who turned out for that meeting and took it in their stride!



To be added to a mailing list for newsletters and correspondence go to:

<http://sa.familyfirst.org.au/mlist>

www.sa.familyfirst.org.au

FAMILY FIRST not into Sandpit Shenanigans on Bikie Bill Tuesday 6 May 2008

FAMILY FIRST Parliamentary Leader DENNIS HOOD MLC has confirmed his Party's commitment to see the Parliament give SA Police the powers it needs to effectively police the outlaw motorcycle gang element in South Australia.

"What we are seeing in relation to this Bill are the true colours of some parties", Mr Hood said. We are certainly not as soft on crime as some parties, who want to punch gaping holes in this important bill for bikies and their lawyers to exploit."

Mr Hood said his Party took a dim view of all of the amendments to the Bill, numbering some 80+ mostly between the Greens and Democrats.

FAMILY FIRST initially had some concerns about some of the specific measures in this bill, however, following detailed discussions with the Attorney General and other Senior Ministers, we received specific assurances placed on record that this bill would target only those involved in serious illegal organised crime.

Mr Hood said that FAMILY FIRST took a very dim view of organised crime. "To oppose this Bill is to tell our police that we do not trust them, and to tell organised crime that we are not interested in running them out of our state. Some politicians talk about getting justice for victims, but the opposition to this Bill equates to opposition to justice for the victims of bikie violence in South Australia."

Mr Hood concluded that the proof would be in the pudding with these laws, and he looked forward to an update from the Government on their implementation in the coming 18 months.

FAMILY FIRST Stands up for Sweatshop Workers

The FAMILY FIRST Party has continued its 3-year campaign for better protection for sweat-shop workers, or 'outworkers', used to produce goods such as clothing in South Australian homes. Highlighting that it is often migrant families who work from their homes (often women, engaging their children to help), on April 30, 2008, ANDREW EVANS MLC explained that outworkers suffer huge production quotas with very poor wages and come under duress from their bosses, yet have no minimum protections enjoyed by the rest of South Australia's workers.

You can read Andrew's speech [here](#).

FAMILY FIRST Opposes Workcover Changes

The FAMILY FIRST Party has taken a stand for injured workers and their families by opposing the Rann Government's changes to Workcover, which will see injured workers entitlements cut severely. DENNIS HOOD MLC, speaking on the Bill on April 30, 2008, identified Workcover's mismanagement and the Government's inaction about it as the reasons why the unfunded liability had got out of hand, and that the private self-insurers had shown that there was nothing wrong with the laws, being able to avoid massive liability using the same legislation.

You can read Dennis' speech [here](#).

FAMILY FIRST Joins Move to get Ethical Super into SuperSA Tuesday 6 May 2008

FAMILY FIRST Parliamentary Leader, DENNIS HOOD MLC, has celebrated his Party's achievement seeking to introduce ethical or 'socially responsible' superannuation with the support of others in the Legislative Council.

The *Statutes Amendment (Ethical Superannuation – State Superannuation) Bill* began as another party's bill calling for superannuation offerings for state superannuants that provided funds having a concern for "society and the environment". FAMILY FIRST added that the funds must also have a concern for "issues of conscience accepted within the general community".

"FAMILY FIRST supports ethical superannuation", Mr Hood added, "There is a long and proud tradition starting with the Quakers and John Wesley in the 1800s, through the Methodists and others to take political action via invested funds to press for companies to change their practices. The Quakers for instance were pulling their funds out of slave-trading investments before William Wilberforce famously, and finally, got his Bill through the British Parliament in the early 1800s to abolish the slave trade."

Mr Hood believed the outcome of the Bill demonstrated the value of the Legislative Council. "Here we have the minor parties, not beholden to the thinking or donations of the major parties, pushing for sensible reform", Mr Hood said, "and FAMILY FIRST, as the clear choice of South Australians as the third party in State politics, has achieved a fair balance with this Bill to ensure that state superannuants have ethical investment products that represent the ethical concerns of all South Australians".

"Once passed, the Government should consult with the ethical investment industry to ensure the objectives of impacts on society, environment and conscience are all met and, ultimately, products offered to State (SuperSA) superannuants"

Mr Hood called upon the Treasurer to support the amended Bill in the House of Assembly. This bill is yet to be voted on.

Release of Grand Theft Auto IV Resisted

DENNIS HOOD MLC appeared on Seven News and in other media condemning the April 29 worldwide release of the latest instalment in the Grand Theft Auto franchise, Grand Theft Auto IV. The game, which features continuous violence and encourages negative attitudes towards innocent citizens, dangerous driving, eluding police, simulated sex, prostitution and participation in organised crime, has been strongly opposed by FAMILY FIRST.

You can read Dennis' question to the Police Minister in the Legislative Council [here](#) and his Matter of Interest contribution on the game [here](#).



HON DENNIS HOOD Addresses Parliament on Suspended Sentences

HON D.G.E. HOOD: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Police representing the Attorney-General a question regarding suspended sentences.

District Court Chief Justice Terry Worthington, in an undated defence of suspended sentences on the Courts Administration Authority website, states at the conclusion of that defence that:

“A suspended sentence is a real sentence but it gives a last chance”.

In the matter of [name not included], decided almost exactly a week ago on Tuesday 29th of April at 2pm, this offender got his FIFTH last chance.

I summarise from the sentencing remarks:

- police found 23g of amphetamine - 1.41g pure - at his home
- this is a trafficable quantity attracting maximum penalties of 25 years and/or \$200,000 fine - so it is a serious offence
- jury found he was possessing for sale
- he was 44 years of age, with no dependants
- he was a regular methamphetamine user
- had a record of dishonesty offences since 1991
- he has had the benefit of four suspended sentences before
- had also previously served time after 1993 for four charges of selling and possessing cannabis and amphetamine for sale
- head sentence: 2 years 6 months' jail
- non-parole period: 1 year 3 months



This prison sentence was SUSPENDED with a \$1,000 bond to be forfeited only if the offender failed to be of good behaviour for a period of 2 years.

My questions is:

1. My question is: as a result of the Chief Justice of the District Court describing suspended sentences as 'a last chance', and in light of sentences such as that which I have just described, how many last chances does the government think appropriate for convicted drug dealers in this state?
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DENNIS HOOD MLC, FAMILY FIRST — Drug Trafficking Penalties

5AA 12.10-12.20 Wed 9th April 2008



(Byner: ... given that if you've got ... three and a half kilos ... a traffickable quantity by definition, you wouldn't think that there would be too many extenuating circumstances, ...it appears to be a very small fine for what appears to be a very serious offence ... what kind of extenuating circumstances could there be that would make any court in its right mind say to a person with a trafficable amount of drugs ...) I think you've outlined the facts of the case very well ... there were 3.5 kilograms of cannabis discovered, in addition to four cannabis plants hydroponic equipment ... by definition this is a trafficable quantity ... penalties are very severe indeed ... and yet the penalty issued was \$250. Now I'd like to say that I'm surprised by this ... but I'm not. The truth is this is a fairly standard level type penalty that issues for these sorts of offences, ... been many cases where people are given fines in their [unclear] for similar level offences and it's just an absolute joke ... *(Byner: ... what possibly complicating factor could exist where you wouldn't sentence somebody to a much higher tariff for having trafficable amounts of drugs? ...)* I've read the sentencing remarks in full ... and there was no extenuating circumstances outlined in this case which was unusual. Normally there are some remarks made ... there were none on the website in this particular case ... at the end of the day, regardless of the extenuating circumstances if or if not they exist, the reality is this is a very serious offence. ... \$250 just doesn't cut it ... not even a slap on the wrist, it's a feather on the wrist if I can call it that *(Byner: so what are you going to do?)* ... a number of things ... I'll continue to raise these matters and I raised it in the parliament yesterday formally asking the Attorney General to review the matter. Furthermore I have been preparing for a number of weeks now .. almost ready, some legislation to introduce mandatory minimum sentences ... it is time to introduce mandatory minimum sentences ... it is time to introduce those mandatory sentences *(Byner: you will never get it up. The Labor Party as a matter of policy will not wear it)* that's not going to stop me trying Leon ... you may be right ... I firmly believe that we need to introduce them here in this state because if we don't people are going to keep getting \$250 fines for such serious offences and it's just not acceptable *(Byner: well we've only recently changed the law to make it an offence .. to own the equipment to even smoke the stuff, so I'm ... rather interested ... a possibility that the DPP will appeal)* Yes and I've actually requested that that be the case in parliament yesterday. but just on the point of not getting this through the parliament, I think ... that certainly shouldn't stop us trying. ... but secondly if the public can write into the politicians, if they can ring their politicians and express their outrage at this, which is why I go on this show and raise these matters, if that were to happen enough then we have a chance to get these laws changed and I just appeal to people who are listening ... please, pick up the phone, get on the email and let your politicians know - the government in particular - it's just not acceptable.

