

An Open Letter to the Premier and Leader of the Opposition

The Hon Morris Iemma MP
Parliament House
Macquarie Street

The Hon Peter Debnam MP
Parliament House
Macquarie Street

Dear Mr Iemma & Mr Debnam

In recent years drastic changes to NSW laws have made it very difficult for injured people to get fair compensation.

Motor Accident Victims

Harsh medical tests exclude 90% of people injured in a motor vehicle accident from recovering any form of general damages.

The government claims that benefits have increased under the Motor Accidents Act, when payments per traffic casualty have fallen by 75% from 1999 to 2005.

Work Injuries

The lump sum payment for a permanently disabled worker in NSW is a mere \$11,000. Workers' rights to sue their employers for damages have all but been abolished.

Compensation is no longer assessed by experienced Judges in open court. Instead, doctors assess compensation behind closed doors, using an American guide book that was never intended for that purpose.

Where Has the Money Gone?

Since 1999 green slip insurers collected \$8bn in premiums, yet in the same period only \$1.8bn was paid out in benefits.

WorkCover has improved its position by over \$3bn in just three years, largely due to restricting access to benefits for injured workers.

The Need for Reform

A joint Parliamentary Committee of Labor, Liberal and independent members, after an extensive review, unanimously recommended wide ranging reform. The Government rejected its recommendations and the Opposition has been silent.

Mr Iemma, Mr Debnam, the pendulum has swung too far. We ask you to restore transparent processes and fair compensation.

Michael Slattery QC
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