16/11/2017

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**The death of democracy**

COUNTRYMINDED candidate for New England Pete Mailler said he is dismayed by the death of democracy in New England after the Tamworth Business Chamber’s decision to cancel its Meet the Candidates event because of the disdain shown by one candidate.

“It is simply beyond me that the event would be called off because the National’s candidate, who has demonstrated his absolute contempt for the people of New England by refusing to participate. The tradition of the public hall meeting has existed since the time of federation,” Pete said.

“The Tamworth Business Chamber has insulted every other legally entered candidate, many of whom have invested substantial amounts of time and money engaging in our democratic process.

“Just what is Joyce so afraid of? The National Party machine probably knows because it certainly has him on a very tight leash. It doesn’t seem to want him loose in public, but, really, this out-of-towner excuse is weaker than water, considering that he was once an out-of-towner candidate also.”

“If Joyce believes he is the best candidate for the Seat of New England then he should have no reason to hide. If he believes in the principles of our democracy then he should embrace the process and engage the electorate and the competition in a public debate. His boycott of any candidate forum is nothing short of disrespect for the electorate, the candidates and our system of government.”

Pete said CountryMinded was running to get a better deal for the electorate.

“We have a vision for New England and we want to talk to people about the issues – renewable energy, education, protection of Ag land and water from CSG extraction and Big coal,” he said.

“The CountryMinded campaign is serious and we have serious things to say. Our team has invested significant time, energy and resources to run a campaign that deserves respect and acknowledgement, and so do the other candidates.”

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