



# SENATOR THE HON RICHARD COLBECK

Senator for Tasmania

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture

M E D I A R E L E A S E

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## Labor/Greens alliance continues to threaten Tasmania's Special Species Timber sector

The Tasmanian Special Species Timber industry remains at threat from the Labor/Greens alliance at the Commonwealth level.

Labor today again sided up to the Greens to oppose a coalition motion that called for sensible and sustainable access to resource for this important industry for up to 2 000 Tasmanians, generating \$70 million for the Tasmanian economy.

The split between State and Federal Labor on this issue shows how out of touch Federal Labor is with the Tasmanian electorate.

As recently as 29 July, Labor leader Bryan Green spoke of his support for the Special Species sector. Federal Labor continues to ignore him.

The Special Species sector in Tasmania plays an important role in contributing to Tasmania's reputation for unique and high quality products.

Designers, artisans, boat builders, luthiers, cabinet makers and craft workers all rely on the supply of special species timbers.

These are mostly small scale businesses that produce high value products that embody the essence of Tasmania's culture and history.

It is an industry that should be valued and supported – not undermined and threatened as the Greens and Federal Labor continue to do.

Federal Labor must now tell Tasmanian whether they support the Special Species Timber industry or not.

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Motion 802 of the Australian Senate was agreed to (ayes 35, noes 29) as follows:

The Senate —

(a) notes:

- (i) that the Tasmanian specialty timber industry accounts for over 2 000 full-time equivalent jobs, thousands more part-time hobbyists and contributes over \$70 million a year to the state's economy,
- (ii) the support of both the Tasmanian Premier (Mr Hodgman) and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Green) for the long-term sustainability of the iconic specialty timber industry, and
- (iii) that the Australian Greens and the Australian Labor Party previously supported the continued low impact harvesting of special species timber in the 2013 extension of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area; and

(b) calls on the Australian Greens to abandon their policy backflip and work with the Tasmanian Government to protect the future of the mostly small-scale businesses that produce high value products that embody the essence of Tasmania's culture and history.