



Matt Stevenson

Liberal for Denison

Hon Lara Giddings MP
Deputy Premier, Minister for Health
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Dear Ms Giddings,

I am writing in regard to the “Step Back. Think” Campaign as a policy to tackle the issue of street violence.

As I am sure you are aware, Tasmania suffers more street assaults per capita than both Victoria and Queensland. In fact in 2008 we recorded nearly 90% more street assaults than Victoria and nearly 65% more than Queensland on a per capita basis. On top of statistics, it is the real life impact that street violence causes that has brought this issue to the fore in recent times.

My comparison between Tasmania, Victoria and Queensland is pertinent. Two of these states have supported pro-active anti-violence campaigns aimed at changing the cultural view of street violence. Needless to say, if Tasmania was involved in such a campaign, there would be no need for me to raise this matter with you.

Over the past few months I have been raising awareness of both the ‘One Punch Can Kill’ campaign that emerged in Queensland, and the ‘Step Back. Think’ campaign that has begun in Victoria. Both campaigns focus on using new media to get their message out, and both have a focus on using peer pressure to attach social stigma to street violence.

In fact the ‘Step Back. Think’ campaign has gone further. The Minister for Education in Victoria has commissioned the group to undertake a pilot program in up to 10



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schools. The program will allow volunteers to enter schools and deliver the anti-violence message. This starts to create a cultural shift towards violence, something that is vital in reducing this problem.

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I have no doubt that as Minister for Health you understand the impact that street violence has on our health system, and further, the impact violence has on our community. I write to you as I believe that the foundations of these two campaigns, that of using new media and peer pressure to attach social stigma to street violence, and creating a cultural shift through education, have merit and should be considered for use in Tasmania.

I wish to gain your support for reducing street violence. I believe that a campaign, similar to the 'One Punch Can Kill' or 'Step Back. Think' campaigns, would be of great benefit to our State and wish to have your support in progressing this idea into a reality – especially before the festive and summer silly season begins.

I look forward to your response and working towards tackling street violence in Tasmania with a campaign aimed at changing the culture of Tasmanians, through peer pressure and education, to being firmly against street violence.

Yours Sincerely,

Matt Stevenson

Liberal Candidate for Denison

Candidate for Alderman Glenorchy City Council