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11 October 2005

ICAN – Independent Candidate Advisory Network launched

The independent MPs in the House of Representatives today launched ICAN – the Independent Candidates Advisory Network to provide advice, support, and a focal point for people interested in standing as true representatives of the people at future elections.

Peter Andren, Member for Calare, Tony Windsor, Member for New England and Bob Katter, Member for Kennedy launched ICAN at Parliament House this morning and introduced former Telstra Country Wide Manager Mr Gavin Priestley, as the co-ordinator of ICAN.

“The Independent Candidate Advisory Network is best described as a resource centre, providing advice and support for those seriously considering running as independent candidates at future elections,” Peter Andren, Member for Calare said.

“ICAN is all about returning Australian parliaments to the people and putting representation back into politics in this country. ^{whose}”

“The best way to do this is to encourage people to stand as true independents who will represent their electorates free of the vested interest of a party. Parties are about getting and keeping power for themselves. Representation and the voters come second.

Gavin Priestley recently left his employment Telstra Country Wide area general manager for western NSW and has volunteered for the job of co-ordinating ICAN.

“In my 5 years with Telstra Country Wide I have had an overwhelming number of people say to me they did not want Telstra sold under any circumstances,” Mr Priestley said.

“The one day debates in the Senate and House on the Telstra sale legislation were a disgrace and left many people in the area I served feeling completely disenfranchised.

“This is why we need more independent representation – to ensure a more meaningful debate on such important issues. ICAN will be the vehicle to help achieve this,” he added

“What we are saying is simply if I *can* represent my electorate, Peter and Bob obviously *can*, then you *can* and on issues like the full sale of Telstra, we *can*! Country people *can* if they vote in their own representative,” Tony Windsor said.

Member for Kennedy, Bob Katter said: “Barnaby Joyce’s capitulation to the party line on Telstra is exactly why I was forced to leave the party. He is living proof you can’t truly represent your electorate within the current party system.”

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For further information:

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