



Senator Alan Eggleston

Liberal Senator for Western Australia

Chair of the Senate Economics References Committee

Deputy Chair of the Senate Economics Legislative Committee

MEDIA RELEASE

ANSTO stonewalls vital cancer treatment

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The manufacture of a vital treatment for late stage cancer sufferers has been “deliberately stonewalled” by ANSTO according to its developer Professor Bruce Gray— with the peak body failing to provide any reasonable explanation for their inaction at Senate Estimates hearings today.

Senator Alan Eggleston pointed out ANSTO’s unique responsibility as the only organisation capable of producing the new radioactive cancer treatment, however ANSTO CEO Adrian Paterson suggested there may be alternative providers.

Interestingly, its website proudly lists one of its competitive advantages, “ANSTO is the only organisation in Australia with a nuclear reactor able to produce radioactive products for use in medicine, pharmaceutical and agricultural industries.”

Without ANSTO’s support, the technology will be exported and then shipped back into Australia — a missed opportunity for Australian jobs, revenue and technological expertise.

“This product is a shining example of Australian research and innovation, which is being flagrantly mismanaged by ANSTO, the very organisation that should support and promote it,” Senator Eggleston said.

“More importantly, terminally ill cancer patients are being deprived of a treatment option merely because ANSTO seemingly refuses to engage in timely commercial negotiations.”

When questioned, ANSTO’s CEO claimed that an existing contract with a direct competitor to Professor Gray’s company, Sirtology was slowing negotiations.

“ANSTO is aware that Professor Gray developed all of the manufacturing processes that ANSTO already uses and that would be used for Sirtology’s new product — which surely rules out any commercial conflict,” Senator Eggleston said.

Senator Eggleston called for a quick resolution to the impasse, to ensure late stage cancer sufferers have access to this vital treatment, and a more comfortable quality of life.

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