



# Media Release

## Senator Alan Eggleston

### Liberal Senator for Western Australia

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## Ombudsman's office faces axe under Rudd's penny pinching

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2009

Kevin Rudd will have a fight on his hands if he goes ahead with the closure of the Commonwealth Ombudsman's Office in Western Australia, according to WA Liberal Senator Alan Eggleston.

“Labor wants to save \$120,000 by shutting off access to this vital Government service, yet it's happy to squander \$42 billion on a stimulus package which has no guarantee of steering this country away from recession.”

Senator Eggleston said access to the Commonwealth Ombudsman's Office in person, rather than over the telephone, encouraged many Western Australians to bring forward their cases that would otherwise go unheard.

“This office plays an incredibly important role for the people of Western Australia, and is critical in bridging the psychological distance between Western Australia and Canberra,” the Senator said.

“Ultimately, the closure of the Commonwealth Ombudsman's Office will simply confirm the belief that the bureaucrats in Canberra do not appreciate the need to provide services on the ground in WA.”

Senator Eggleston said he also held concerns over the future of the Outreach program which operated out of the WA office. The Program focuses on indigenous, regional and remote areas across Western Australia.

Senator Eggleston has written to the Prime Minister urging him to protect the interests of the people of Western Australia and allow them continued access to this vital Government service.

**Ends**