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Merit based process for appointing Commissioners welcomed

ACT Greens MLA Deb Foskey today welcomed the commitment of all members of the ACT Legislative Assembly to a transparent, merit based selection process in appointing and in-principle re-appointing all ACT commissioners and statutory office holders.

This commitment was given in response to a motion put by Dr Foskey in the Assembly today.

“This is particularly important now as the Government is about to create the new Human Rights and Service Review Commission. As part of this process a new Disability Services Commissioner and possibly a new Community Services Commissioner will be appointed. Existing Commissioners will be subject to reappointment. In addition the Government has foreshadowed that next year it will establish a Children and Young Persons Commissioner” said Dr Foskey.

“These Commissioners will play a vital watch dog role to promote and protect the rights and interests of Canberra’s vulnerable people. It is imperative that the best people possible are appointed to these positions because their roles are complex. They require a detailed understanding and delicate balancing of individual rights, the public interest and government responsibility.”

“A transparent and merit based selection process is also necessary because many statutory office holders are required to investigate complaints about government behaviour. If they are considered too close to government they will not be able to effectively perform their statutory roles. Nor will they be effective protectors of the interests or people they are charged with looking out for” Dr Foskey said.

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