



**AccessCardNoWay.net**

The ID Card –  
A People for the Government or a  
Government for the People

By

Tim Warner  
Founder – AccessCardNoWay.net

**An address to  
The Australian Adam Smith Club (Melbourne)  
Monday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2006**

**At the St Kilda Road Parkview Hotel, Melbourne**

## ***The Speaker***

Tim Warner – is a former State Parliamentary Staffer, who has also worked for the Liberal Victorian Secretariat and as an intern (before the term became notorious) with the Republican National Committee, Washington D.C.

He has been a Liberal Party member for 21 years, and has stood in the Liberal interest on three occasions. In 2002 he chaired the Victorian Liberal Party's 'Communications & IT' Policy Development Committee.

Tim has been the Hon. Secretary/Treasurer of the Australian Adam Smith Club (Melbourne) since 1987.

He has studied at the University of Melbourne and Swinburne University in Mathematics, Philosophy, History, & Media. He also has gained a Financial Management qualification from the Securities Institute of Australia.

In addition he is the Vice-President of Swinburne Student Radio Inc (a streaming student radio station). He has been on the Management Committee in various positions since 1999.

Tim's career has included stints at restaurant ownership, running a rock and roll rehearsal studio, a second hand bookshop and managing a small international airline. His most instructive employment was as postmaster and manager of a truck stop in far north Queensland.

His grandfather Sir Arthur Warner, was a founder of the 'Institute for Public Affairs' and a member of Henry Bolte's Victorian Cabinet. His father Graham Warner was the first managing Director of GTV 9 Melbourne, and Chairman of many public companies including 'Futuris', 'Electronic Industries' and 'Underwriting & Insurance'.

Tim is a partner in his family's boating equipment firm 'Anchor Marine' based in Sandringham, Victoria.

Michael, thank you for the kind introduction.

Public discussion travels in a large pendulum arc, on each subject it swings between opposite poles over time. The extremes reached and the area covered does change over time, but there is a recurring theme to most public debate.

We are entering a crucial phase in the ongoing debate over privacy, and the right of the individual as against the needs of the State.

I am standing here and making this argument after waiting some weeks after the initial announcement for a concerted protest to begin – it didn't happen and I am going to ask you this evening to assist me and begin such a protest.

After Mr Hockeys' initial announcement I asked around my friends and political acquaintances and was bewildered by the three responses I most commonly received –

The Debate is over – we lost to computers, data mining and a creeping government expansion.

Or

9/11 and 7/7 changed everything, we live in a world of danger and we must protect ourselves against this civilisations enemies.

Or

If it cuts down on dealing with the Human Services paperwork – bring the Card on.

This address will have four main parts.

First – I wish to calmly outline what is proposed, and the selling points that are claimed by the proponents of the Access Card.

Second – I will outline my philosophical objection to such a scheme.

Third – I will outline the deficiencies in the case for and the practical dangers in the scheme.

Finally, I will ask you to support our rights and heritage and give you positive steps you can take to preserve our freedoms.

## **The Access Card – What is it and why do I need one?**

The Access Card was first publicly mooted on 26<sup>th</sup> April this year, after plans for an ID card being denied in July last year <sup>1</sup>. To be fair – or perhaps cynical, the Federal Government stopped the concept of an ID Card as it would “actually increase the risk (as) only one document would be counterfeited to establish identity” according to Mr Ruddock our Attorney General. What the Government is implementing is a voluntary Access Card scheme, to streamline access to selected Government entitlement programmes <sup>2</sup>.

Instead of 17 separate forms of identification and entitlement proofs we will have one.

An individual will only have to change one address on moving; the card will remove the necessity of filling out copious forms at each providing agency.

When disaster relief is required, one swipe of a card and they will receive a cash payment, and all will be recorded and filed in an instant.

The biggest saving to the public will be in the PBS or Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. At present there is a continuing leak of services. First and second generation residents who are passing their Medicare Card to relatives, to gain prescriptions at highly subsidised prices, this is costing the tax payer many millions of dollars a year.

A second major benefit will be in monitoring and ensuring entitlement programmes are managed efficiently, with the relevant information each department will be able to tell the recipient if they are eligible and how to gain their entitlement.

The Health Insurance Commission are also touting benefits if sufficient information were included in the card on allergies and medical conditions – 2% of admissions to hospitals were due to adverse drug reactions, many of which were due to lack of knowledge of Doctors or Pharmacist of existing patient ailments or continuing medication.

Mr Hockey has mooted that we could reduce our entire ‘plastic burden’ by the Government leasing space on the card to companies for identification or loyalty programs <sup>3</sup>.

The Federal Government had KPMG research the implementation of an Access card scheme. They found that maximum net savings over a ten-year period of \$3 billion dollars were possible <sup>4</sup>. That is 0.3% of programme outlays.

We had identification cards in the Second World War without descending into despotism.

We already use Medicare for our health needs, and it is used for checks like the 100 points for financial services.

This will be like a Drivers License just an efficient means of ensuring everything is done right at Human Services.

What is wrong with this picture?

The very first point that must be made is this not an 'Access Card' this is an ID Card. Medicare is used by 100.67% of the total population <sup>5</sup>. If you think that is strange, after these sorts of figures the ABS started to use Medicare to count the population between censuses.

Professor Fels has been asked to oversee the privacy aspects of this scheme simply stated this in his draft Privacy report

*- It is true to say that obtaining the card will be voluntary and that some people will not need to have a card because they may not readily access any of the benefits associated with it. However, most Australians are eligible for Medicare...*

The new card will be required to not just access existing entitlement programmes, the Federal Government will utilise this as a method of identification for all face-to-face encounters with the public, the most restricted option discussed being for Dept of Human Services, Veterans Affairs and Medicare.

This scheme covers nearly the entire population, you have to present it to officials who ask for it – if it walks like a duck, quacks like a duck – its' a duck. This is an ID Card.

“Papers please”, will become part of the Australian lexicon.

Professor Fels has suggested that the Registry of Access Card numbers be held separately, and that the demand for an Access Card for ID purposes other than those of the three main departments be made an offence. I will deal with the inadequacies of this response later.

## **The Philosophic Case against the Card**

The driving force behind the Anglo-Saxon political arrangements of the last two hundred years has been the assumption that Government is limited, and that the citizen is free to do anything that does not demonstrably harm their fellow citizens.

This is the result of a thousand years of political development.

The fight to restrict arbitrary government: the Magna Carta in 1215, defining that the King and the Executive were limited.

The English Civil War in the 1640's: which decided that only the people could write and enforce laws.

The Glorious and Bloodless Revolution of 1688: that proved that the King and the Government held their positions on the peoples say so.

The American Revolution of 1776: which set a benchmark in constrained government.

I will not go so far as to say there is not a society or that there is no community.

But that society is made up of individuals who each have their own beliefs and values.

They have an absolute property right in their own persons.

That right includes the right of information that they have about them. Any passing or trade of that information should be contracted, and limited by the consent of the person.

The plea that this is an increase in efficiency misses the point. What is the Government doing that needs to be that efficient with our information?

I attended a speech recently where the Treasurer justly claimed that the biggest step forward in the recent budget was the removal of a tax on exiting superannuation.

It was not the removal of the tax per se that was the achievement. It was that the administration of the tax had become so complex nobody could administer his or her affairs without professional guidance – and even then you had no guarantee as to the final tax outcome.

Here the Government is claiming to simplify seventeen claims for identity, in four authorities or departments of the executive (being the Health Insurance Commission, Human Services, Veterans Affairs,

Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme), and then to cure this administrative nightmare they are making a further claim upon us - the citizenry.

It would be far more equitable to ask the Government to get its administration in order, to limit its need for information.

To slightly digress – the Treasurer in the same speech proudly proclaimed the raising of the minimum tax threshold ‘in effect’ to \$10,000.

In fact it still is \$6,000 what the ATO does is give you some money back after you have paid it, hired an accountant to do a tax return and then a civil servant has approved a transfer to your bank account.

The member for Indi – Sophie Mirabella (nee Panopoulos) has rightly pointed out that perhaps raising the tax threshold to \$10,000 or even higher would in fact be an increase in all our liberties and a decrease in government intrusion – and an increase in real efficiency.

Back to the ID card.

The concept of limited or constrained Government is not a right-wing plot, or a dated political concept – outmoded by the needs of a technological society.

It is a fundamental requirement for a free society. It is needed even more in a technologically advanced society.

You must design a constitution and a government as if the devil himself may become its leader. Angels may be in larger supply than I may believe, but the devil can do great damage in a little time.

To believe that any scheme or program can be left in such a state, that it can be available for misuse, is to have such a sunny view of humanity that it invites the devil to run for office.

It took Hitler less than five years to take the Weimar Republic from Liberal Democracy to a technocratic slave state.

He was greatly assisted by an ID Card system that made the scientific dissection of society possible.

First, the poorer recent Jewish immigrants, then the rich merchant Jews, followed by the middle class Jews. Then the academics and the other trouble makers.

I fully recommend a flash documentary on the no2id dot net website on the results of ID cards when dictators arise <sup>6</sup>.

I was asked recently what could the Government change that would have me accept the Access Card – and the answer is it is an anathema to me.

My personal view is that the ID Card represents the total inversion of the magic recipe that has made the west such a success.

This recipe – created by the British and perfected by the American Founding Fathers – is that you give the government a power only on the strictest undertaking after exhausting all other options.

You don't set out to hand powers to government because it is a convenience.

### **The Practical Problems with what is proposed.**

I gratefully acknowledge the work of Electronic Frontiers Australia and the no 2 id site for some of the following points.

The very first issue is with the maths. KPMG in their report in fact stated that \$3 billion was the absolute maximum that could be saved by this scheme.

IT professionals have queried the cost, originally estimated at one billion and ninety million dollars <sup>7</sup>.

The ACCI – the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry - has estimated total cost to the economy of an ID Card system at \$15 billion dollars <sup>8</sup>

No one outside the department has seen the original proposal on which KPMG wrote its case, and the financial details have been removed from the public version <sup>9</sup>, as it would interfere with the tender process!

The Human Services Department stated that if we knew what they were going to save money on, the tendering companies would inflate their bids to get their cut of the pie.

We do know that the cabinet totally redrafted the original proposal to make it National Security friendly – which is ominous by itself.

Without that data one can only make claim and counter claim – but long experience shows public programs do not tend to come in under budget.

The second major feature is the security and fraud prevention characteristics.

The high security card readers – there will be three types of reader – to reach three different levels of information – the Government readers, the Medical professional readers and the emergency/ambulance hand readers.

The number of such readers will be in the tens of thousands. The mechanism for retrieving data will not be a secret for more than five minutes - Smart card or no smart card.

The ID Card is relying entirely upon the strength of the coding to preserve your information and to ensure copies cannot be made.

The creation of a single database to store your Access Card number and address, called the Secure Customer Registry Service, is a major privacy problem.

At present when other departments or outside individuals wish to ask about your details they have to contend with changing address details on records, name changes or differences of data collection.

Recently the Child Support Agency has admitted to releasing addresses, and other personal details, to outside parties, simply because of phone requests. This is at a department that is supposed to have a high level of privacy, due to the high level of angst and potential for domestic violence.

If other departments just ring up and say, “Joe Blogs - Access Card 123456”, and the other civil servant says, “Yes, we have that file”. You don’t need it saved on one computer – worse though that would be.

The creation of single identifier – of itself is a major risk to our privacy and personal security. It makes identity fraud easier, it makes unwarranted intrusion on our affairs by civil servants (whether at the behest of the government or not) that much easier.

An ongoing scandal in Victoria is the LEAP Police database. If a bored desk Sergeant can look up the records on their next door neighbour – how much easier now he can ring his mate at Human Services and find the neighbours pension details all with one identifier.

The National Security Features can be dismissed with the greatest of ease.

The Attorney General Mr Ruddock – at a speech on June 29<sup>th</sup> last year  
*“We do not support the approach where all personal information is centralised on one database, and a single form of identification is issued.*

*This could increase the risk of fraud because only one document would need to be counterfeited to establish identity.”* <sup>10</sup>

The Security Agencies contemplated a full National ID Card – and decided that it wouldn’t produce results.

It would give a false sense of security; it would cause a storm politically, because it would require fingerprinting or retinal scanning of the entire population to be effective.

Everyone from Policemen to bank tellers would assume the authenticity of a person who produced the correct ID card.

The greatest of our external enemies have the money and the willing volunteers already within our society to forge these documents or to have misleading ones issued.

The old saw about being alert is grounded in a fundamental truth. You cannot hope to be safe if you aren’t vigilant.

Pretending that a magic piece of plastic will take away the Bin Laden’s is infantile.

As a rationale person if we see something suspicious we should report it, dulling this response with placebos is counter productive.

The 7/7 bombers were known to the Police and Security services, but were not thought an active threat. Their identities were not an issue.

The perpetrators of 9/11 - some had false ID’s, but they were foreigners and would have been accepted on the basis of foreign passports – something not dealt with by this initiative.

I am afraid some of my conservative acquaintances have been sold a pup. This will take from their rights, but without delivering on the safety.

It reminds one of Ben Franklin’s aphorism  
*“Any society that would give up a little liberty to gain a little security will deserve neither and lose both”*

Then there are the very strange comments from Mr Hockey on May 8<sup>th</sup> – about selling space on the card to selected companies.

Professor Fels is talking about making the use of the card illegal for anything other than Medicare and Human Services, Mr Hockey is busy offering space to track your buying habits on the very same card.

I can't offer further comment on the commercialisation of the Access card because Mr Hockey shut up, but he didn't repudiate what he stated on May 8<sup>th</sup>.

There is another object I haven't seen raised anywhere but I find its logic overwhelming.

Ballooning of entitlements.

If you have a wonderful card that identifies all that is known by the Department of Human Services then suggestions as to uncollected or under utilised entitlements will be helpfully made by the staff.

I believe that this encouragement to efficient enrolling in entitlement will cost far more than any savings the Federal Government is contemplating.

The final practical point is the doozy – function creep.

This card will have a large memory. It is being used to keep an electronic version of your picture, your name and your Access Card number – nothing else. What's this memory meant to contain?

This card once it is rolled out will be a lightening rod, every scheme that every pressure group and every civil servant have had on their wish list in the back of their filing cabinets.

The UK Greens have mentioned using the UK ID Card to help run future petrol rationing systems.

The Health Insurance Commission has already stated they want us to volunteer our medical records, to stop hospital errors due to pre-existing conditions – like diabetes, penicillin resistance and epilepsy.

In the UK they have started to move to get basic records included on their cards, although it was expressly ruled out when the legislation was passed.

Professor Fels takes heart from the fact that the Government would need to revisit this legislatively.

I beg to differ. The courts have proved very weak reeds in standing up to absurd constructions on 'original intentions' of Acts of Parliament.

Enshrined in our Constitution is the right of 'Trial by Jury' for all indictable offences. Australians have been deprived of this right by changing of the term used by prosecutors from '*indict*' to '*presentment*'.

Once the concept is legislated, especially if they have a regulations clause included, we will not see this matter raised in Parliament for many years.

This also brings us to the very first point raised. This replaces 17 claims for identity. The majority from one department – Human Services.

This is a way for us to forget the complication and over governing by making it invisible.

If we don't fill out the form in triplicate for Child Care – we forget that there could be three programs run out of two offices to regulate four acts of Parliament.

We can let the insanity go unchecked.

But seeing that complication and getting angry is OUR duty.

The citizens right, and his responsibility is to hold these jokers to count for these grotesque wastes of scarce resources.

### **What can we do to stop the ID Card?**

We need to get Postcards in the Café's, we need to hire of halls to give talks, printing of pamphlets (reduced by website downloads), t-shirts, bumper stickers – the entire panoply of modern campaigning.

I will be writing letters, giving addresses, getting petitions, maintaining websites.

I hope I have got your blood up.

Now, "Do we want the Card?"

Well what can **you** do?

The very first thing you can do is read some of the material that I have provided here this evening. An informed speaker is a pre-condition on persuading others.

Second, contact your MP – **especially** if they are a Liberal MP. I have appended lists to the back of the documents. I will also be getting contact lists onto the website that is being created.

Some Liberal MPs have voiced private concerns and they need to be able to tell the Party Room about public revulsion at the concept.

Third, write to Professor Fels, he has asked for feedback on the Access Card and individual privacy. The link is again in the back of the papers and on the website.

Fourth, write to the papers and discuss this with your friends and acquaintances. The Access Card has largely gone undiscussed – because it is posited as a welfare and national security measure – and that it is non-compulsory – i.e. only 100.67% of the population.

Finally, I ask for your support directly. I have started a website – [accesscardnoway.net](http://accesscardnoway.net) and it has a donate button with PayPal.

I will campaign regardless of any outside support, but with support I can undertake a wider set of tasks and with a wider geographic net.

I close with a thought – we may be happy giving this skeleton of an ID card into the hands of John Howard, we may even be happy with Mr Beazley – who has kept his feet on the ground on matters defence and security. But we were 17,000 votes from a Latham Government only eighteen months ago.

We are righting a blank cheque on our future and our children's future.

I ask for your support.

## FOOTNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> See - Government Rules out National ID Card Scheme – The Age 12<sup>th</sup> July 2005. <http://www.theage.com.au/news/National/Govt-rules-out-national-ID-card-scheme/2005/07/12/1120934230285.html#>.

<sup>2</sup> See – Australian Government – Dept of Human Services - . [www.humanservices.gov.au/modules/resources/media\\_centre/2006/060509\\_access\\_card\\_to\\_cut\\_red\\_tape.pdf](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/modules/resources/media_centre/2006/060509_access_card_to_cut_red_tape.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> See – ‘Minister flags business access to 'smart card' data’, May 11<sup>th</sup> 2006 - <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200605/s1636326.htm>

<sup>4</sup> See Australian Government, Dept of Human Services, KPMG Executive Summary - [http://www.humanservices.gov.au/media/releases/kpmg\\_key\\_findings.htm](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/media/releases/kpmg_key_findings.htm)

<sup>5</sup> See Australian Government - Health Insurance Commission, Annual Report 2004-05 ,[http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/about/about\\_us/annual\\_report/04\\_05/statistics/mcare1a.htm](http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/about/about_us/annual_report/04_05/statistics/mcare1a.htm)

<sup>6</sup> See ‘The Lessons of History’ - <http://www.no2id.net/content/flash02.html> and ‘Terrorism’ - <http://www.no2id.net/content/flash02.html> both are flash documentaries of about 4 Mb.

<sup>7</sup> See ‘The Australian’ ‘Smartcard heading for fall’ 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2006 - <http://australianit.news.com.au/articles/0,7204,18994759%5E15306%5E%5Enbv%5E,00.html>

<sup>8</sup> See ‘The Australian Financial Review’ ‘ID cards could cost \$15bn’ 21<sup>st</sup> Dec 2005 - <http://afr.com/articles/2005/12/21/1135032067419.html>

<sup>9</sup> See ‘Australian Privacy Foundation’ - half way down - ‘Current Status’ - [http://www.privacy.org.au/Campaigns/ID\\_cards/HSAC.html](http://www.privacy.org.au/Campaigns/ID_cards/HSAC.html)

<sup>10</sup> Australian Government – Attorney generals site – speech to Smart Card Summit see pts 57 & 58 - [http://www.ag.gov.au/agd/WWW/MinisterRuddockHome.nsf/Page/Speeches\\_2005\\_Speeches\\_29\\_June\\_2005\\_-\\_Speech\\_-\\_Opening\\_Keynote\\_Address\\_to\\_Australian\\_Smart\\_Cards\\_Summit\\_2005](http://www.ag.gov.au/agd/WWW/MinisterRuddockHome.nsf/Page/Speeches_2005_Speeches_29_June_2005_-_Speech_-_Opening_Keynote_Address_to_Australian_Smart_Cards_Summit_2005)

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**Liberal MPs in Victoria - SENATORS**

**Fifield, Mitchell Peter (Mitch)**

42 Florence Street, Mentone VIC 3194

E-mail: [senator.fifield@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.fifield@aph.gov.au)

03/9584 2455

1300 797 110 (toll free)

03/9584 8347 (fax)

**Kemp, The Hon. Rod** (Minister for the Arts and Sport)

12 Pascoe Vale Road, Moonee Ponds VIC 3039 (PO Box 556, Moonee Ponds VIC 3039)

03/9326 1088

03/9370 9120 (fax)

1300 131 739 (toll free)

4 Treasury Place, Melbourne VIC 3002

E-mail: [senator.rod.kemp@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.rod.kemp@aph.gov.au)

03/9650 7274

03/9650 9427 (fax)

**McGauran, Julian John James**

Suite 17, Collins Place, 45 Collins Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

E-mail: [senator.mcgaوران@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.mcgaوران@aph.gov.au)

03/9650 3622

1300 131 746 (toll free)

03/9650 3565 (fax)

**Patterson, The Hon. Kay Christine Lesley**

Shop 3, 10-40 Burwood Highway, Burwood East VIC 3151

E-mail: [senator.kcpatterson@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.kcpatterson@aph.gov.au)

03/9888 0091

1300 132 317 (toll free)

03/9888 0107 (fax)

**Ronaldson, The Hon. Michael**

4 Treasury Place, Melbourne VIC 3002

E-mail: [senator.ronaldson@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.ronaldson@aph.gov.au)

03/9650 0255

03/9650 9031 (fax)

**Troeth, The Hon. Judith Mary**

Unit 1, 322-332 St Kilda Road, St Kilda VIC 3182

E-mail: [senator.troeth@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.troeth@aph.gov.au)

03/9593 9511

1300 132 475 (toll free)

03/9593 9971 (fax)

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**Members of the House of Representatives (Liberal/Victoria)**

MHR for Menzies,

**Andrews, The Hon Kevin James**

Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations

Minister Assisting the Prime

Minister for the Public Service

1st Floor (PO Box 124), 651-653 Doncaster Road,

Doncaster Vic 3108

Tel : (03) 9848 9900, Fax : (03) 9848 2741

E-mail: [Kevin.Andrews.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Kevin.Andrews.MP@aph.gov.au)

MHR for McEwen,

**Bailey, The Hon Frances Esther (Fran)**

Minister for Small Business and Tourism

237 Maroondah Highway, Healesville Vic 3777

Tel : (03) 5962 1255, Fax : (03) 5962 1364

Toll Free : 1300 131 186

E-mail: [Fran.Bailey.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Fran.Bailey.MP@aph.gov.au)

MHR for Deakin,

**Barresi, Mr Phillip Anthony**

Unit 5 602 Whitehorse Road (PO Box 232), Mitcham Vic 3132

Tel : (03) 9873 8351, Fax : (03) 9873 8356

E-mail: [Phil.Barresi.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Phil.Barresi.MP@aph.gov.au)

MHR for Dunkley,

**Billson, The Hon Bruce Fredrick**

Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence

Minister for Veterans' Affairs

"Plowman Residence" (PO Box 501), 20 Davey Street, Frankston Vic 3199

Tel : (03) 9781 2333, Fax : (03) 9783 7912

E-mail: [B.Billson.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:B.Billson.MP@aph.gov.au)

MHR for McMillan,

**Broadbent, Mr Russell Evan**

10A Napier Street, Warragul Vic 3820

Tel : (03) 5623 2064, Fax : (03) 5623 2509

E-mail: [Russell.Broadbent.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Russell.Broadbent.MP@aph.gov.au)

---

MHR for Higgins,

**Costello, The Hon Peter Howard**

Treasurer

Malvern: Suite 1, 1343 Malvern Road, Malvern Vic 3144

Tel : (03) 9822 4422, Fax : (03) 9822 0319

Melbourne: 4 Treasury Place, Melbourne Vic 3002

Tel : (03) 9650 0244, Fax : (03) 9650 0242

E-mail: [higgins@aph.gov.au](mailto:higgins@aph.gov.au)

MHR for Kooyong,

**Georgiou, Mr Petro**

695 Burke Road, Hawthorn East Vic 3123

Tel : (03) 9882 3677, Fax : (03) 9882 3773

E-mail: [P.Georgiou.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:P.Georgiou.MP@aph.gov.au)

MHR for Wannon,

**Hawker, The Hon David Peter Maxwell**

Speaker

190 Gray Street, Hamilton Vic 3300

Tel : (03) 5572 1100, Fax : (03) 5572 1141

E-mail: [David.Hawker.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:David.Hawker.MP@aph.gov.au)

MHR for Flinders,

**Hunt, The Hon Gregory Andrew (Greg)**

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for the Environment and Heritage

Shop 4/184 Salmon Street (PO Box 274), Hastings Vic 3915

Tel : (03) 5979 3188, Fax : (03) 5979 3034

E-mail: [Greg.Hunt.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Greg.Hunt.MP@aph.gov.au)

MHR for Corangamite,

**McArthur, Mr Fergus Stewart (Stewart)**

Government Deputy Whip

2/75 High Street, Belmont Vic 3216

Tel : (03) 5243 8766, Fax : (03) 5241 1927

E-mail: [Stewart.McArthur.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Stewart.McArthur.MP@aph.gov.au)

MHR for Indi,

**Mirabella, Mrs Sophie**

117 Murphy Street, Wangaratta Vic 3677

Tel : (03) 5721 5377, Fax : (03) 5721 8196

E-mail: [Sophie.Mirabella.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Sophie.Mirabella.MP@aph.gov.au)

---

MHR for Aston,

**Pearce, The Hon Christopher John (Chris)**

Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer

Unit 7, 426 Burwood Highway, Wantirna South Vic 3152

Tel : (03) 9887 3890, Fax : (03) 9887 3893

E-mail: [Chris.Pearce.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Chris.Pearce.MP@aph.gov.au)

MHR for Goldstein,

**Robb, The Hon Andrew John AO**

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Immigration and  
Multicultural Affairs

368 Centre Road, Bentleigh Vic 3204

Tel : (03) 9557 4644, Fax : (03) 9557 2906

E-mail: [Andrew.Robb.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Andrew.Robb.MP@aph.gov.au)

MHR for Casey,

**Smith, Mr Anthony David Hawthorn (Tony)**

Suite 1, 16-18 Croydon Road, Croydon Vic 3136

Tel : (03) 9724 9222, Fax : (03) 9724 9220

E-mail: [Tony.Smith.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Tony.Smith.MP@aph.gov.au)

MHR for Murray,

**Stone, The Hon Dr Sharman Nancy**

Minister for Workforce Participation

426 Wyndham Street (PO Box 884), Shepparton Vic 3632

Tel : (03) 5821 5371, Fax : (03) 5821 8429

E-mail: [S.Stone.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:S.Stone.MP@aph.gov.au)

MHR for La Trobe,

**Wood, Mr Jason Peter**

83 Boronia Road, Boronia Vic 3155

Tel : (03) 9762 4066, Fax : (03) 9762 9847

E-mail: [Jason.Wood.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Jason.Wood.MP@aph.gov.au)

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## **WEBSITES**

[www.accessscardnoway.net](http://www.accessscardnoway.net)

Tims site which is being built daily. Keep checking as it will have plenty of stuff over the next fortnight in particular.

[www.no2id.net](http://www.no2id.net)

**NO 2 ID** - The UK site that is fighting the ID Card in the UK. Great material, some funny clips and strong mini-documentaries.

[www.efa.org.au](http://www.efa.org.au)

**Electronic Frontiers Australia**, a fine site dedicated to the freedom of the internet. Check there section on privacy for a very well researched paper on the Access card (which is kept updated – do check back occasionally).

<http://www.efa.org.au/Issues/Privacy/>

And the guys themselves

<http://www.humanservices.gov.au/access/index.htm>

### **The Office of Access Card**

[http://www.humanservices.gov.au/access/consumer\\_privacy\\_taskforce.htm](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/access/consumer_privacy_taskforce.htm)

**The Consumer and Privacy Task Force** with Professor Alan Fels group, which invites you to submit your thoughts on the card, PLEASE DO.