



# Media Release

## Senator Mathias Cormann

### *Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Health Administration*

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#### **ROXON FOCUSED ON DEALS NOT GOOD HEALTH POLICY**

The Government's handling of the proposed Medicare Levy Surcharge changes in the Senate has become an absolute farce according to Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Health Administration Mathias Cormann.

"Yesterday the Health Minister announced the Federal Government's latest backdown on a key budget measure in Question Time - with much fanfare and using much dishonest spin," Senator Cormann said.

"Since then the legislation has yet again fallen in a hole.

"The Senate Inquiry reported on this measure back on 27 August 2008. We have been ready to debate the many flaws in this legislation since, with the Government refusing to progress it.

"So much for the discredited Government accusations that delays caused by necessary Senate scrutiny were tantamount to economic vandalism.

"Again this morning the government's proposed Medicare Levy Surcharge changes were listed for debate as the first item on the agenda – only to be deferred yet again.

"Clearly yet again, the Government had not done its homework before rushing off and announcing another proposed change to the Medicare Levy Surcharge thresholds.

"This has been a disaster right from the start.

"This measure is fundamentally flawed and will continue to be fundamentally flawed even if all the amendments that have been circulated so far were to be passed by the Senate.

"At no time has the Government conducted a proper assessment of the impact of this measure on our health system.

"Even after softening the blow to our health system slightly, the Government still does not know what the impact on private health insurance premiums or public hospital waiting lists will be.

"Increasing the Medicare Levy Surcharge thresholds will see hundreds of thousands of people drop private health cover, it will push up the price of premiums and it will put huge additional pressure on public hospitals that are already overburdened.

"The Government should either bring this legislation on now so that it can be dealt with – or cut its losses and go back to the drawing board," Senator Cormann said.

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