

# **MEDIA RELEASE**



**The Hon Peter Dutton MP**  
*Federal Member for Dickson*  
*Shadow Minister for Health and Ageing*

**Senator Mathias Cormann**  
*Senator for Western Australia*  
*Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Health Administration*

**9 September 2009**

## **Health insurance rebates saved**

The Rudd Labor Government's moves to begin dismantling private health insurance in Australia have been defeated.

The "*Fairer Private Health Insurance Bills*" were voted down by the Coalition and all cross-bench Senators.

Its attempts to reduce private health insurance rebates were bad public policy which would have been bad for our health system.

Labor promised repeatedly before the last election and since that it would retain private health insurance rebates, but trashed that promise by attempting to introduce tiers to lower rebates from 30 per cent to zero for some people.

Shadow Health Minister Peter Dutton and Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Health Administration Senator Mathias Cormann said the legislation to phase out rebates for those on incomes above \$75,000 was ill-conceived and poorly thought through by Health Minister Nicola Roxon and Kevin Rudd.

"Labor's plan to force people out of private health insurance would have resulted in drastic extra pressures on our public hospitals and is something no Australian should support," Mr Dutton said.

"Australians were deceived by the Rudd Labor Government on private health," Senator Cormann added.

Initially the Government claimed its measures would force just 25,000 people to drop private health insurance, but then was forced to admit that 1.7 million people – almost ten per cent of the population – would face big hikes in insurance premiums and taxes.

“Had this legislation been passed all Australians would have been affected,” Mr Dutton said.

“Those with insurance would face higher premiums, some would be forced to drop their insurance and that would have meant more people seeking treatment at public hospitals with longer waiting times for treatment.”

Senator Cormann said Labor was wasting money everywhere with its cash splashes and then hitting the 11 million Australians with private health insurance to claw back funds.

“I’m pleased to say the Senate took a stand against Labor’s crusade against private health,” Senator Cormann said.

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