



Jeremy Hanson CSC MLA

Australian Capital Territory

Liberal Member for Molonglo

Opposition Whip

Shadow Minister for Health, Police, Indigenous Affairs, Veterans' Affairs and Corrections

Mr Mark Cormack
ACT Health
GPO Box 825
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601

For Information:
Mr. Shane Rattenbury
Speaker

Ms. Katy Gallagher
Minister for Health

Dear Mr. Cormack,

Thank you for your letter of 25 May 2009. I note your concerns and your explanation of ACT Health's role in the matter of Freedom of Information (FOI) material that is the subject of my press release "Another Gallagher Cover-Up".

As you are aware, the Opposition has an uncensored version of the relevant FOI document. This has provided me with sufficient evidence to make the statements contained in my press release.

I remain of the view that Section 41 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1989* was used inappropriately to justify removal of the words 'cellar door', 'bed and breakfast' and 'winery' from the document. In my view, information of a politically sensitive nature has been removed, as opposed to 'personal information' as is required under the Act.

It is my responsibility as a Member of the Legislative Assembly to highlight such issues to the public. Ministerial responsibility requires Ms Gallagher to be accountable for the administration of her Department and I believe that it is quite unreasonable to assert that my comments were in any way directed at you or any other ACT Health official. If you have misinterpreted or extrapolated my comments to that effect then that was unfortunate and erroneous.

If non-executive Members of the Legislative Assembly are to perform their responsibilities of holding the Government to account, and representing the interests of the community, they should not be subjected to letters from departmental officials demanding retraction of statements that are critical of the Government.

I believe your letter is highly inappropriate and request that if you have any grievances in the future that you direct them to the Minister.

Yours sincerely,

Jeremy Hanson, CSC, MLA

28 May 2009