SALLY COSTELLA

Senate Candidate for Tasmania

THE CLIMATE SCEPTICS PARTY

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Professor David Flint AM
National Convenor
Australians for Constitutional Monarchy
GPO Box 9841
SYDNEY NSW 2001

BY EMAIL: electionwatch@norepublic.com.au
AND BY POST

3 August 2010

Re: Election Watch 2010

Dear Professor Flint,

Thank you for your email of 3 August 2010, seeking pledges from me, should I be elected as a Senator for Tasmania, on a number of issues related to constitutional reform.

The Climate Sceptics Party does not have predetermined policies on these particular constitutional issues. In such cases, candidates from our Party that are successful in being elected to Parliament have three guiding principles:

1. Obtain the best possible scientific evidence.

2. Ensure that the views of ordinary Australians are sought and heeded.

3. Allow our Members of Parliament to facilitate or lead the public debate, regardless of any differences of opinion they may have.

I am happy to provide my own personal opinions on the issues you raise. As noted above, these do not necessarily represent the views of The Climate Sceptics Party or any of its endorsed candidates.

Constitutional reform is an issue close to my heart. Let me declare from the outset that my husband and I are firm republicans. However, we argue equally

strongly that Australia's remarkably stable system of parliamentary democracy should not be jeopardised by hasty, ill-conceived changes to the Constitution, such as was put to the people of Australia in the disastrous 1999 referendum. Indeed, my husband publicly supported your own position, both before and after the referendum, and we both joined you in voting "No" to the horrendous Turnbull–Frankenstein model put to the Australian people on that occasion.

After that failure, my husband was determined to construct a republic model which maintains, as closely as possible, our current system of parliamentary democracy, but which gives the Australian people what they seek most of all: a popularly elected President. His book on the issue, *A Republic For All Australians*, was published in Senate proceedings in 2004.

Given this background information, you will understand why it is simple for me to make the following declarations in response to your detailed questions.

1. I do not believe that the British Crown should automatically reign as the Australian Crown. The Queen has performed impeccably in her role as Queen of Australia, but we should seek to patriate her powers at the end of her reign.

2. I believe that, when our remaining constitutional ties to the United Kingdom are finally severed, a new Australian Flag should be sought. It is not appropriate to have the flag of a foreign nation in the position of honour in our national flag. My husband has had one suggested flag design on his website since 1995, but neither of us are wedded to this design.

3. I declare my support for our current system of parliamentary democracy, save for the institution of the Crown, and declare that, if elected as Senator for Tasmania, will do all in my power to protect our current system in any move to patriate the powers of the Crown.

4. If elected as a Senator for Tasmania, I would absolutely oppose any Bill seeking to undermine the right of the Australian people to be consulted in a referendum before any change is made to the Australian Constitution. Indeed, my husband's constitutional model, which I would put forward in any debate on this issue, strengthens the right of the Australian people to be consulted by referendum in any constitutional crisis.

5. If elected as a Senator for Tasmania, I would absolutely oppose any change to the Australian National Flag being effected other than following a popular vote in accordance with the provisions of Section 3(2) of the *Flag Act 1953*.

6. If I am elected as a Senator for Tasmania, in the event of proposed changes to the Constitution or to the Flag being referred to a vote by the people, I will publicly insist on and vote for the adequate funding of both the "Yes" and "No" cases. The wisdom of such a course of action was confirmed in the 1999 referendum campaign, where a widely

> disparate set of organisations and individuals—yourself and my husband being among them—formed an effective coalition against hasty and ill-conceived changes to our Constitution, that would have wrought lasting and potentially irreversible damage to the fabric of our parliamentary democracy.

Despite our being on opposite sides of the republic debate, I thank you, Professor Flint, for offering a voice of reason at a time when patriotic fervour almost got the better of the nation.

I also thank you for seeking my views on these important issues, and welcome you to contact me if you wish to have further discussions on these issues, either in public or in private.

Sincerely,

Sally Costella