



Julian Leeser MP
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MEDIA RELEASE

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LABOR'S PAY-TO-PLAY FOI SCHEME AN ATTACK ON ACCOUNTABILITY

The Albanese Government's plan to roll back scrutiny and normalise the use of fees for Freedom of Information (FOI) is the latest in a series of attacks on transparency and accountability.

Shadow Attorney-General Julian Leeser said the move continues a disturbing pattern from a government determined to shield itself from scrutiny.

“Since coming to office, Labor have overseen a surge in FOI refusals, normalised the use of non-disclosure agreements in consultations, issued a secret playbook directing public servants on how to handle Estimates, flouted Senate orders for production of documents, tried to change standing orders to limit Parliamentary scrutiny, and slashed the very staff whose job it is to hold the Government to account,” Mr Leeser said.

“Now they want a wholesale truth tax that will require Australians to pay-to-play to access information held by the government.”

Mr Leeser said he was awaiting a brief on the proposed reforms, but that the initial indications raised serious concerns.

“This Government talked a big game on transparency when they were in Opposition, but since coming to office have gone in the opposite direction,” Mr Leeser said.

“A wholesale truth tax that requires Australians to pay-to-play on FOI sends a clear message: Labor believe information belongs to them, not the people.”

“This Government's pattern of behaviour over many years shows it has a problem with accountability, and it has a problem with transparency. These changes are a character test for the Prime Minister, and whether or not he is able to be open with Australians,” Mr Leeser said.

ENDS.

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