Member for Murrumbidgee

Shadow Attorney-General
Shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Jeremy Hanson CSC MLA

Australian Capital Territory

Senator the Hon. Fiona Nash
Minister for Local Government and Territories
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

The Hon. Greg Hunt, MP
Minister for Health
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Fiona and Greg!

Dear Ministers,

The ACT Labor government has announced that they will be providing free 'pill testing' of illicit drugs for the Spilt Milk music festival being held in Commonwealth Park on 25 November 2017.

Given the Commonwealth government's anti-drug campaign, Minister Hunt's recent comments against pill testing, and the prominence and nature of the venue, I am writing to bring this matter to your attention.

I note that the NCA's functions specify that it conduct works that are 'desirable to maintain or enhance the character of the National Capital.'

I also note the legislation states 'the Minister may give the Authority general directions in writing as to the performance of its functions,' and also that 'the Authority has power to do all things necessary or convenient to be done for or in connection with the performance of its functions.' The trial is not only, in our view, questionable on legal grounds, it also raises the issue of liability, particularly when the legislation states that the Commonwealth shall 'indemnify the Territory, and keep the Territory indemnified, against any action, claim or demand.'

Given this festival is imminent, I would appreciate your early advice on the government's interpretations on this matter.

Yours faithfully,

Jeremy Hanson, CSC, MLA
Shadow Attorney-General

28 **September 2017**

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