



# Media Release: National Schools Chaplaincy Program

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## *FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

**Thursday, 19 June 2014** - The Launceston Skeptics, while welcoming the decision of the High Court that the Commonwealth should not fund chaplains in schools, are concerned that both sides of politics are intending to circumvent this decision.

It is extremely disappointing that the ALP and the Coalition both appear to have so little interest in respecting the clear decisions by the High Court.

The Abbott government has in the recent budget provided funding only for chaplains and excluded trained non-religious counsellors who were providing professional support to students under the program.

The chaplaincy organisations have claimed they will not preach in schools, but given that most chaplains are not highly trained counsellors or social workers this raises the question of what support other than religious guidance they would be able to provide.

Secretary of the Launceston Skeptics, David Tyler said "There are other funding priorities that should take precedence over potential religious indoctrination in schools, and we would urge both sides of politics to reconsider their support of the chaplaincy program."

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Launceston Skeptics Inc. (the association) is a non-profit organisation, which seeks to promote critical thinking and an understanding of the scientific method. The association aims to:

- Stimulate discussion of scientific knowledge and other matters of interest, such as human rights and social issues;
- Encourage citizens and representatives of the news media to adopt a critical attitude to claims, which are not supported by reason or credible scientific evidence; and
- Conduct and participate in community events, providing information to the public in order to pursue the association's objectives.