



Brad Hazzard MP

Attorney General Minister for Justice

MEDIA RELEASE

26 March 2015

FEDERAL CHANGE OF HEART WELCOMED ON LEGAL ASSISTANCE FUNDING CUTS

News that the Federal Government will not cut funding to the Aboriginal Legal Service (ALS), Community Legal Centres and Legal Aid Commissions is welcome relief for the thousands that rely upon them.

NSW Attorney General Brad Hazzard applauded Federal Attorney General George Brandis, on the reversal of his decision which was due to commence on July 1.

“Only weeks ago, every State and Territory Attorney General wrote to Mr Brandis asking him to continue funding to the ALS, Community Legal Centres and Legal Aid Commissions,” Mr Hazzard said.

“These services provide legal assistance to tens of thousands of people across NSW.

“Today’s decision means these people – some in the most far flung corners of NSW – will continue to receive legal advice and representation which is a basic human right.

“We welcome the guarantee of funding to ALS, Community Legal Centres and Legal Aid Commissions.

“These proposals would have impacted the most vulnerable members in our community, including women and children who are victims of or at risk of family violence, as well as Indigenous Australians.

“We thank Mr Brandis for heeding the warning of State and Territory Attorneys General – it was clear from the start that this was something that would impact people across the political divide.

“Today’s announcement shows the Prime Minister’s recent recognition of the importance of tackling domestic and family violence and closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians is at the forefront of decisions that are being made.

“I thank my State and Territory Attorneys General colleagues for advocating on behalf of vulnerable communities across Australia and am delighted the Federal Government has now joined in our vision to ensure equitable access for legal services,” Mr Hazzard said.