



## **DAVID MORRIS MP**

**Member for Mornington  
Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Environment  
Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Local Government**

### **Labor's Bushfire Debate A Farce**

#### **Legislative Assembly 12<sup>th</sup> August 2010**

**Mr MORRIS** (Mornington) — Last Tuesday the house considered a take-note motion on the report of the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission. Those few members who had the opportunity, in the main, made appropriate contributions.

But as with everything this government touches, there was a political imperative — to close down debate, to mute criticism and to avoid any serious discussion of the findings in the report.

The government had refused to allow a special sitting of Parliament to consider the report; it refused to allow this house to focus exclusively and for an appropriate period of time on what we have learnt from the events of that tragic day.

What it offered was an opportunity for barely one-third of the number of members of the house to speak. Many spoke in a constrained time frame of 5 minutes. All that was to address what the Premier described in his speech as an event that left a scar on every one of us.

It was important that, in light of the commission's findings, members again recognise the events of the day, the trials of many who survived, and honour the memory of those who perished. We must also learn from events both to assist the recovery, which sadly so far has failed too many people, and to take proper actions to prepare for fire seasons to come.

As a member of an electorate that includes many extensive bushland residential precincts, I am only too aware of the very real risk to life that remains and the lack of government action that have been taken to reduce that risk. The government's actions this week have proved its priorities are about power and not about people. In seeking to avoid debate, the government has proved it is not fit to govern this state.