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**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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## **GOVERNMENT ASKED TO COME CLEAN ON DRUG TREATMENT**

Independent MLC Ann Bressington is challenging the Government to come clean with South Australians regarding its attitude to Drug Treatment following the introduction of her Bill into Parliament yesterday for mandatory treatment of problematic drug users.

“I was surprised to read in the *Advertiser* yesterday that the Government has denied rejecting legislation for mandatory treatment,” Ms Bressington said.

“Last Thursday the Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse informed me that the Government was not supporting the Bill and that she would be announcing this in her speech next week. She was embarrassed when I told her that the Bill had not even been introduced.

“If the Government is comfortable with their stance why are they denying that they oppose this Bill? I know the Minister would not have the authority to make that judgment or even that statement without Caucus approval. I believe this has been a major blunder.”

Ms Bressington said research shows mandatory treatment can be much more effective than voluntary treatment.

According to the California Study (1994), conducted by the University of Chicago’s National Opinion Research Centre:

- “For every \$1 spent - \$7 was returned
- The cost of treatment was \$200 million but the return to the state in the following year reached \$1.5 billion”

The McDonnell Douglas Corporation 1989 states:

- “Criminal Activity dropped by 2/3<sup>rd</sup> from 77% to 20%
- Emergency room admissions fell by 1/3<sup>rd</sup>”

Ms Bressington said additional research shows that Sweden, which has mandatory treatment, has 40 times lower rates of amphetamine use than that of Australia.