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Media Release for Immediate Release

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HEMP FURIOUS AT PLANT LAW CHANGES UNDER COVER OF ETSA DEBATE

Cannabis Law Reform lobby group HEMP SA are furious at the contempt shown by Human Services Minister Dean Brown for the people of South Australia. Today the Minister sneaked the changes in the States' Controlled Substances Act past the parliament and the public without debate. Not satisfied with hiding the policy shift (the most significant in 13 years) at the last election, the Minister has shown by his actions that the changes would not have stood up to critical scrutiny.

HEMP believe the changes will see more criminal convictions of (mainly) young and otherwise law abiding South Australians. It will drive cannabis growers indoors (exactly the opposite of it's intended effect) and make indoor growing using hydroponics the method of choice. Cannabis prices will rise and heroin will become relatively cheaper. Already we have the law sending mixed messages; possession of syringes are legal (an admirable public health initiative to reduce the spread of blood borne diseases) but possession of implements for using Cannabis will see you fined and possibly convicted. Of the more than 16,000 CENs issued last year, nearly 40% (38.4%) were for simple possession of implements!

HEMP agree the current on-the-spot fine system has failed; It's easier for Police to charge people and has led to a massive increase in criminal convictions of young South Aussies, but claims that "syndicates have exploited the legislation" are a furphy. The police have always had the power under the Controlled Substances Act to prosecute people involved in commercial cultivation or supply.

HEMP SA have produced a Briefing Paper on the Three Plant ~~Plan~~ Law which comprehensively details the unintended negative outcomes this change will have.

To arrange a copy: e-mail: hempSA@va.com.au with "Request Paper" in the subject line, OR by fax, please call Mr Jamnes Danenberg on (08) 8297 9442.

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