



## Family First tells Libs: sign here for our preferences

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Prime Minister John Howard is being pushed to introduce family impact statements on all new laws in return for the crucial preferences of the Family First party.

Family First federal chairman Peter Harris said today the party would give its preferences to the Liberal Party and National Party in 109 of the 150 lower house seats at the October 9 poll.

But some Liberal candidates had been asked to sign a three-year voting agreement on certain Family First policy platforms before preferences being included in the deal, Mr Harris said.

He said Mr Howard was "incredibly receptive" to introducing family impact statements assessing all legislation put before cabinet, similar to current economic impact statements.

The prime minister's willingness to consider the family impact statements helped deliver the coalition preferences from Family First, Mr Harris said.

"The prime minister hasn't agreed to it ... (but) he's incredibly receptive based on discussions as late as yesterday and this morning," Mr Harris told reporters in Adelaide.

"This means that all legislation will be scrutinised as to impact on the wellbeing of Australian families."

Family First had also held discussions with Labor about preferences, he said.

"Family First have taken into account the cross-preference deals between the ALP and Greens in the lower house," Mr Harris said.

"We have also taken into account the lack of ability for ALP candidates to exercise a conscience vote on a reasonable range of moral and ethical issues.

"ALP and Greens' history on moving away from conservative values has been another factor of consideration."

Mr Harris warned that Family First preferences could yet be moved from some Liberal and National candidates.

"There have been some Liberal candidates who we have asked to sign a three-year voting agreement on certain Family First policy platforms and those issues remain still to be resolved," he said.

"There are some candidates for the Liberal Party and the National Party that don't necessarily reflect the family agenda that we have.

"So we would be wanting commitments from those individuals over the next three-year term that if we are to preference them, that they would support the policy initiatives that we are promoting to the government."

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