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## **NEW POLL: AUSTRALIANS WANT SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE IN THE NORTH**

In a landmark Galaxy poll conducted exclusively for the Institute of Public Affairs (IPA), Australia's leading free market think tank, 60% of Australians have said that they are in favour of the establishment of a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) to stimulate economic growth in Northern Australia.

A SEZ could include measures to encourage investment such as reducing fringe benefits and payroll tax; securing property rights; and reducing regulatory duplication across all jurisdictions.

Director of the North Australia Project at the IPA, Hugh Tobin, said that it was clear that Australians wanted government to show vision and establish a low tax, low regulation zone across Northern Queensland, the Northern Territory and Northern Western Australia.

The survey asked 1,063 Australians across all states: 'Would you be in favour or opposed to the establishment of a Special Economic Zone with low taxes to stimulate economic growth in Northern Australia?'

Other key findings from the survey were:

- 73% of regional Queenslanders and Western Australians were in favour of a SEZ;
- This compared with 55% in the Southern States of SA, VIC, TAS and NSW;
- In Brisbane and Perth 66% were in favour of a SEZ;
- Only 20% of all Australians were opposed to a SEZ.

The results follow other recent polling commissioned by the IPA which found that 60% of Australians thought that Canberra was out of touch with the needs of Northern Australians.

'The mining boom has the potential to improve infrastructure, the cost of living and the availability of housing in Northern Australia. But the government must ensure that the Australian resource sector remains globally competitive,' said Mr Tobin.

'The public don't want new taxes. This poll shows Australians want the government to support families and businesses, rather than punish them.

'Special Economic Zones are internationally recognised as successful policy frameworks for stimulating economic growth in under-developed areas.

'A Northern Special Economic Zone would reduce the regulatory and tax burdens on businesses and families across the North and stimulate development for the benefit of all Australians,' Mr Tobin concluded.

The Galaxy poll was conducted over the weekend of 13-15 May 2011. A full briefing document is available at <http://anewnorth.ipa.org.au>. More information is also available at [www.andev-project.org](http://www.andev-project.org).

**Media Comment: Hugh Tobin, Director - North Australia Project, 0417 303 701, [htobin@ipa.org.au](mailto:htobin@ipa.org.au)**