

# Gutwein snubs planning meeting

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A PUBLIC meeting tomorrow to discuss the State Government's planning reforms has been labelled a political stunt by Planning Minister Peter Gutwein, who has refused to attend.

Twenty community and environment groups have orga-

nised the meeting to highlight what they say is a weakening of protections and assessment rigour, a reduction in public engagement and a restriction on third-party rights of appeal in the new statewide planning scheme.

"Many people across the Tasmanian community are alarmed and have concerns

about what it will mean for their backyards and bush," Sophie Underwood, of the Freycinet Action Network, said.

The Opposition's planning spokeswoman Madeleine Ogilvie, Greens' planning spokeswoman Rosalie Woodruff, RMIT environment and planning professor Michael Buxton and conservation ecol-

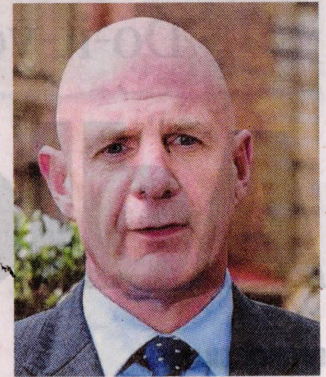
ogy expert Distinguished Professor Jamie Kirkpatrick from the University of Tasmania will address the meeting at the Hobart Town Hall.

Ms Woodruff said by not attending, Mr Gutwein was ignoring community concerns.

Mr Gutwein said the meeting had "been set up as a political stunt by Green and anti-

development groups who won't be happy with the planning system unless they have absolute right of veto over every single proposed job-creating development".

"Our proposed changes get the planning balance between development, the environment and community consultation," Mr Gutwein said.



**NO SHOW:** Peter Gutwein will miss the meeting.