



Steve Fielding **Family First** Senator for Victoria

MEDIA RELEASE

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THE BRAVE NEW WORLD OF TELSTRA

Today's *Financial Review* story about Telstra's secret plans to slash 5000 public phones reveals what is to come once the rest of the telco is sold off.

If this is what Telstra is up to when the Government controls its shares, just imagine what it's going to be like when they don't.

Family First believes Telstra is a service, not a business. And it ought to be treated as a service, not a business where the bottom line is all that matters. That is why Family First voted against the full sale of Telstra.

Australians expect governments to provide essential services, including telecommunications, but now they are paying the price for the government treating Telstra as a business.

And we can look forward to more of this happening.

It doesn't matter what so-called protections are put in place, this will be the brave new world.

We already know that Telstra had investigated removing more than 25,000 pay phones, but decided against the move fearing a political backlash.

The biggest losers from a completely privatised company driven by market forces will be Australians in regional, rural and remote Australia where Telstra's market share is more than 90 per cent.

Family First supports free enterprise, not the free market. The sorry tale of Telstra is a stark example of the difference between the two.

- **Senator Fielding will today film his videoblog from one of the 5000 Telstra public phones being demolished. See the videoblog on his website.**

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