



## LEAKED TED BAILLIEU RECORDING: SENIOR LIBERALS REJECT SUGGESTIONS OF A PLOT TO UNSEAT FORMER PREMIER

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**PHOTO:** Premier Denis Napthine (L) said he would welcome Ted Baillieu to continue in Parliament. (AAP: Julian Smith)

Senior members of Victoria's Liberal Party have rejected suggestions that some in the party are trying to force former premier Ted Baillieu out of his seat. An audio recording of a private conversation between Mr Baillieu and a journalist was leaked to Liberal Party members yesterday. In the recording, emailed along with a transcript to a number of Victorian MPs on Tuesday, Mr Baillieu criticised several fellow Coalition MPs, including anti-abortion campaigner Bernie Finn and his supporters. He also belittled Mount Waverley MP Michael Gidley and Sandringham MP Murray Thompson.



Premier Denis Napthine played down suggestions the leak was part of a campaign from within the party to force Mr Baillieu out of his seat. "Ted's a good friend, a colleague and works hard for the seat of Hawthorn and is part of our team as a Coalition Government."

Denis Napthine, Victorian Premier "Ted's been a long-serving member of the Liberal Party, both in the administrative wing and in the Parliament, and has been a leader of the party who won government in 2010," he said. "Ted's a good friend, a colleague and works hard for the seat of Hawthorn and is part of our team as a Coalition Government."

Planning Minister Matthew Guy said he was happy for Mr Baillieu to stay on and that there was no push to oust the former premier.

"I don't think anyone from the Parliament has made comment on that at all," he said.

Victoria's Treasurer Michael O'Brien and former speaker Ken Smith also rejected suggestions that Mr Baillieu should quit the Parliament



In a statement released yesterday, the Victorian Liberal Party said the email was "sent from someone alleging to be an Elizabeth McRobert". "There is no one with that name who is a party member in Victoria," it said. "It is unclear who is responsible for the distribution of the material but we note that Fairfax Media is seeking legal advice over the matter and stolen recording devices."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-06-25/victorian-liberals-reject-claims-of-a-plot-to-oust-baillieu/5548684>