

Media Release



New Zealand's Top University Debaters Go Head to Head in Business Roundtable's *Big Social Issues Debates*

The New Zealand Business Roundtable is hosting the *Big Social Issues Debates*, a national university debating tournament beginning in secondary schools on March 15 and finishing with a grand final to be hosted by Minister for Social Development Hon Paula Bennett on 24 March at the Academy Galleries in Wellington starting at 5.30pm.

The top debaters from Otago, Canterbury, Victoria and Auckland universities will face off on some of the key social issues facing New Zealand, with moots on education, welfare, health, crime and superannuation.

Six heats will be held in secondary schools in Wellington and Auckland. The two semi finals will be held at events for young professionals and students in Wellington on 18 March at Mac's Brewery, and in Auckland on 23 March at the Gus Fisher Gallery, both starting at 5.30pm and followed by panel discussions featuring experts on the topics.

Among the topics to be debated are:

- *Student Loans Are a Rort on the Taxpayer*
- *Our Liquor Laws are a Licence to Swill*
- *Our Police Ought to be Armed*
- *It's Too Easy to Get into University*
- *We Should Look to the State for Moral Guidance*

Business Roundtable Chairman Rob McLeod said the debates were intended to draw out the issues and encourage young people to take an interest in important public policy issues.

"The Business Roundtable is strongly committed to promoting high quality debate on the significant public policy issues that face New Zealand", said Mr McLeod .

"Our aim is to provide a lively forum for stimulating thinking and discussion. The youth of New Zealand carry the future on their shoulders and we are especially pleased to be able to hold these debates in schools and to audiences of young professionals and students."

Mr McLeod said the membership of the Business Roundtable was highly supportive of the concept and has contributed cash prizes for the winners and runner up team.

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