



**Senator Catryna Bilyk
Labor Senator for Tasmania
MEDIA RELEASE**

Three simple words that could save a life

On 15 September, Senator Catryna Bilyk reminded fellow Tasmanians to turn to someone and ask them three simple words: "Are you okay?"

15 September marks R U OK? Day, a national initiative that aims to prevent suicide by encouraging Australians to connect with someone they care about and stop little problems turning into big ones.

"On this day, the aim is to encourage everyone across the country, from all backgrounds and walks of life, to ask family, friends and colleagues: 'Are you okay?'," Senator Bilyk said.

The Australian Government has provided funding for the running of R U OK? Day since its inception in 2009. It has proven to be a success with approximately 2 million Australians participating in 2010.

"Suicide is a national tragedy that impacts heavily on individuals, families and communities," said Senator Bilyk. "Many Australians have been touched in some way by the effects of suicide. The Australian Government has redoubled national efforts to help prevent suicide and reduce the toll it imposes on all those concerned."

"Staying connected with others is crucial to our general health and wellbeing and helps to dispel feelings of isolation or hopelessness often associated with depression and other mental illnesses which may result in suicide. Regular, meaningful conversations can protect those around us," Senator Bilyk said.

Further information about R U OK? Day is available at www.ruokday.com.au.

If you know someone who is experiencing depression or thinking about suicide, please encourage them to call Lifeline on **13 11 14**.

/Ends 15 September 2011

Media Enquires: Daniel Hulme 0447 000 867