

What does state Labor stand for?

EDITORIAL

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IF STATE Labor were to choose a campaign song right now they could not go past the 2012 hit *Some Nights* by American band fun.

The chorus makes it almost perfect, especially when lead singer Nate Ruess asks: "What do I stand for?"

"Most nights, I don't know anymore," he admits.

Labor MPs and supporters would - at the least - be able to identify with those lyrics.

What their party stands for now that they have walked away from practically every point of difference they had with the Liberal government is a fair question.

This week, Labor abruptly dumped its longstanding opposition to mandatory jail sentences for child sex offences.

It had - particularly through its impressive shadow attorney-general, Ella Haddad - taken a principled stand against mandatory sentencing and rightly accused the government of playing politics.

With that position reversed, Ms Haddad was left to make the feeble claim that it was to protect victim-survivors from being traumatised every time the issue is raised.

In truth, Labor gave in to its fears.

The same motivation was cited for why it abandoned its demands for stronger political donation laws.

Worried the government would not allow an amended bill to pass into law before the next election, Labor simply gave up, delivering what independent MLC Meg Webb described as "one of the most deplorable, shameful and gutless political capitulations and blame-shifting I have ever seen".

The example that will stick in more Tasmanians' minds though is Labor's confusing gameplay over the proposed Macquarie Point stadium.

Leader Rebecca White vowed to do everything the party could to stop the stadium, and yet neither she nor her MPs have fronted a rally against the project.

More to the point, they voted to send it to a planning assessment when they could have joined with most of the independents in the upper house to knock it on the head.

What the Liberals have dubbed "Beclips" may well cause the most damage to the Labor brand.

If Ms White and colleagues do not have the courage of their convictions, why should Tasmanians chance giving them a go?