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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **'Back to the ID card that will not die – Libs revive corpse of the "This is not a national ID card system, honest!" ID card system**

In what appears a deeply cynical last minute move timed to avoid scrutiny, the federal Coalition is reported to be suddenly announcing a 'back to the future' move to re-start its controversial failed Access Card.

This died the death of a thousand cuts in 2007 at the hands of a parliamentary committee with a Howard government majority, when the proposed Access Card legislation could not stand up under serious scrutiny. The draft legislation was infamous for a Kafka-esque 'this is not a national ID card system' provision denying the obvious. The scheme was so lacking in detail, protection for privacy, and any explanation of limits to what the ID number and card could be used for, that the Howard Government could not bring themselves to put it before Parliament or the people.

Businesses and governments had already sunk an estimated \$50-\$100 million into the project, including its premature call for tenders, before the plug was quietly pulled before the last election. Community concerns about privacy, unanswered questions about cost/benefit and functionality, and a botched, out-of-control development process combined to create the perfect storm.

The Liberals now seem to be throwing their lot in with big bureaucracy and Big Brother once again. This is an illiberal policy, especially timed to avoid the hard questions.

There's no case to revive the corpse of the spin-branded 'Access card' (a.k.a the Australia Card Mark II): the unwanted national ID system that dare not speak its name.

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