



press clip

Law change to cover surplus food donations

By MARK BAKER

THE State Government will introduce laws that allow businesses and people to donate surplus food without fearing possible legal action.

The changes will also cover good Samaritans who help strangers in events such as medical emergencies from being sued.

Premier David Bartlett said it was unfortunate that a litigious society meant people were concerned about what ramifications their good deeds might have.

The Government announced a \$10,000 grant for

SecondBite, a group which collects and distributes surplus food to charities, to establish itself in the State.

SecondBite executive director Katy Barfield said the group had been overwhelmed by Tasmanian groups wanting to donate surplus food to people in need.

"We know that families are facing rising costs and it makes accessing nutritious food more difficult sometimes and that's what we aim to provide," she said.

"We threw away 3.38 million tonnes of food in Australia last year and

that's a phenomenal amount of food to throw away."

In Melbourne, SecondBite has increased the amount of food it shifts from 20 tonnes in 2006 to 132 tonnes in 2007 and expects to top 200 tonnes this year.

Mr Bartlett surprised Opposition Leader Will Hodgman in Parliament when he invited him to the launch yesterday.

Mr Bartlett acknowledged Mr Hodgman has raised the idea first but denied he had wedged his opponent into supporting the move.

"I am genuine when I talk about a new Government with a new style of politics that acknowledges good ideas can come from all places," he said.

Mr Hodgman later welcomed the move but said it was one small step that might make a difference to people in need.

Salvation Army spokesman Stuart Foster said there was always more that could be done for Tasmanians struggling.

"We've had to send people away because we don't have enough resources for everybody's need," he said.