



## THE EROSION OF PUBLIC TRUST

Christian Porter's decision to accept an anonymous donation of one million dollars to help cover his personal legal costs has not merely raised questions about his personal judgement. It has exposed larger issues about the extent to which some of our government ministers understand the demands of political leadership in a democracy.

"Mr. Porter's case raises important issues of principle; namely, whether or not politicians (of all political persuasions) should be allowed, in our democracy, to receive substantial amounts of money by way of anonymous donations. In this, the acid test is not what is convenient (or not) for politicians and their supporters. Rather, the only consideration should be in relation to what supports, or undermines, the quality of our democracy," writes **Dr Simon Longstaff, Executive Director of The Ethics Centre**.

"The COVID19 pandemic has been the most significant threat to Australia in the past 50 years ... we need to believe that our politicians will act solely in the public interest and that if, for some reason, they do not, then they will be held to account with at least the same degree of rigour that applies to the rest of us."

However, leaders should not wait until a time of crisis to demonstrate their integrity.

"Every decision – including those that do not 'seem to matter' – builds (or undermines) the ethical capital upon which politicians must draw at times such as these." **READ MORE**

*Dr Simon Longstaff AO is Executive Director of The Ethics Centre. He is available for interview and comment.*

*The Ethics Centre is a not-for-profit organisation designed to bring ethics to the centre of personal and professional life.*

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