



# **Media Release**

***Bob Baldwin MP***

***Federal Member for Paterson***

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## **UGGLY SCENARIO FOR AUSSIE ICONS**

Paterson MP, Bob Baldwin, said he was deeply concerned about the future of Australian icons and jobs, following the move by an American company to trademark the word 'ugg'.

The trademark has been registered in 25 countries and could mean the end of using the word for local businesses in fear of litigation. Mr Baldwin met with Tony Mortel from Mortel Sheepskin Factory in Rutherford today, to discuss concerns about the impact this may have on local jobs.

"Mortel Sheepskins is just one example of an Australian company that this trademark could adversely impact, with the potential to lose around \$300,000 this year. Thoughts of putting on new staff at Mortels, in what is actually a growing industry with enormous exporting potential, will now be on the backburner with a loss of this size," Mr Baldwin said.

"It defies belief that a word like 'ugg' which we use in a generic sense in Australia could be trademarked and jobs be threatened in this way. It's like putting a trademark on the word jeans. Everyone in Australia knows that 'jeans' or 'ugg' is a description of a piece of clothing.

"So what comes next? Flannelette shirts, meat pies or the ute?"

Mr Baldwin said he would raise the matter in Federal Parliament when it resumed in February and he would also take the matter up with the Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, as well as the US Ambassador.