

MEDIA RELEASE

1 June 2026



49% rate State budget “bad”, but net gap narrows to three year-low

An EMRS poll of 600 Tasmanian voters has found the net unpopularity of the 2026 State Budget has narrowed, but with 49.2% still rating it bad for Tasmania against 32.5% who rated it good, and nearly half expecting to be personally worse off, the budget remains deeply unpopular.

49% RATE BUDGET BAD FOR TASMANIA	32.5% “GOOD” RATING – UP 6.5%	69% DISSATISFIED WITH HEALTH FUNDING
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The result extends a sustained pattern of budget dissatisfaction across three consecutive years of EMRS budget tracking. In 2024, the Ferguson budget recorded a net negative gap of 23 percentage points (45% bad, 22% good). In 2025, the Barnett budget recorded a net negative gap of 21 points (47% bad, 26% good).

While this year's result under Treasurer Abetz shows the net gap narrowing to 17 points, it comes with the highest raw "bad" rating of the three years of 49.2%, offset to some degree by the highest raw "good" rating of 32.5%.

Personal pessimism has also reached its highest point in the series: 48% of Tasmanians now expect to be personally worse off as a result of the budget, up from 38% in 2024 and 37% in 2025. Only 6.6% believe they will be better off.

“For three consecutive years, and across three different Treasurers, Tasmanians have delivered a net negative verdict on the state budget.

That being said, the higher “good” and improved net figures this year suggests that some voters at least are marking Treasurer Abetz up for attempting to rein in deficit and debt.” – Brad Stansfield, EMRS Owner and Director.

Dissatisfaction was recorded across all four budget areas tested. Health attracted the highest dissatisfaction of any area, with 69.3% of respondents unsatisfied with the budget's handling of health, the highest figure recorded in the EMRS budget series and up significantly from 61% in 2024 and 50% in 2025. Cost-of-living dissatisfaction also rose to 65.5%, compared with 56% last year and 63% in 2024.

The word association question, which asks respondents to nominate words they associate with the budget, again produced overwhelmingly negative results. The most commonly cited terms were POOR (7.6%), DEBT (7.0%) and DEFICIT (6.7%) — mirroring results from the two previous surveys, in which debt-related language has dominated every year.

Liberal voters were the only major cohort to record a net positive overall assessment of the budget, though more than a quarter of Liberal voters still rated it negatively. Those who voted Independent

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at the 2025 state election were the most critical of any group, with 80.6% rating the budget bad for Tasmania.

The EMRS State Budget Survey was conducted May 25-28 2026 among n=600 via EMRS' online panel. Results are weighted by age, gender, region, education and past vote. The maximum margin of error is ± 4.0 percentage points at the 95% confidence interval. The survey was implemented according to ISO 20252:2019 standards, certificate number 888027.

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