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Tasmanian Crossbench Talks Stall as Parties Clash

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Tasmania's political landscape is marked by deep uncertainty as the state prepares to reconvene its parliament on August 19, 2025. The snap election held on July 19 resulted in another hung parliament, with neither of the major parties securing a majority. The Liberal Party and Labor both fell short of the required 18 seats, leaving crossbenchers holding the balance of power with 11 seats, including five Greens and six others. This outcome forces both sides to court support amid rising frustration over the major parties' reluctance to embrace collaborative governance.

Premier Jeremy Rockliff was reappointed on August 5 under the convention of incumbency. However, his ability to govern rests on whether he can secure sufficient crossbench backing when the new parliament meets. Labor, led by Dean Winter, has

signaled plans to initiate a no-confidence motion, aiming to demonstrate that they have the support to form a government.

Crossbenchers have expressed dissatisfaction with the major parties' approach. Independent Craig Garland, representing Braddon, ruled out any confidence and supply agreement with the Liberals. He described a prevailing majority mindset in both parties and stressed that crossbench participants are ready to work but insist on genuine compromise. Likewise, independent Peter George encouraged both sides to accept that governing must involve listening and finding middle ground rather than forcing unilateral agendas.

Labor's strategy is complicated by its decision to exclude the Greens, who hold five seats, from negotiations. This stance has drawn criticism and is seen as a major hurdle to gaining the eight additional votes needed to form government. Greens deputy leader Vica Bayley reaffirmed that collaboration should include all crossbenchers and warned Labor that they cannot expect support without inclusive engagement.

Meanwhile, the Liberals have floated a draft stability agreement featuring parliamentary protocols and a multipartisan budget panel as a bid for bipartisan cooperation. Despite these overtures, crossbench scepticism remains high, with Peter George calling the timing of the Liberal offer disappointing and reflective of lingering mistrust.

As Tasmania approaches the August 19 sitting, political uncertainty remains high. The crossbench holds significant leverage, but refusal by both major parties to engage inclusively risks prolonging instability. The electorate's rejection of majority governance underscores mounting public expectation for a new style of power sharing and compromise.