OUR PLAN

FOR REGIONAL AUSTRALIA
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KEY POINTS

The Liberal and Nationals Government will improve the economic growth and well-being of Australians living in the regions.

We want to help make regional communities even better places to live, work and raise a family.

Under a Liberal and Nationals Government regional Australians will:

- have access to more and better paying jobs;
- have improved health, education and telecommunication services;
- lead the national effort in tackling environmental and water management; and
- have resilient infrastructure including roads and rail.

Regional Australia underpins our prosperity as a nation and the Liberal and Nationals Government is committed to ensuring that it plays a key role in our future economy.

Our approach to investing in regional Australia focuses on the key areas of jobs, health, education, telecommunications, infrastructure and the environment. These areas, tackled simultaneously, make the most impact and provide the best opportunities for Australians living in regional areas.

Our strong economic management means we can invest in these essential services, provide tax relief for regional families and businesses so they can grow and create more jobs.

A re-elected Liberal and Nationals Government will:

- Boost digital connectivity in regional Australia, including eliminating mobile blackspots across 1 million square kilometres by 2025 (an area larger than the size of South Australia).
- Invest $15 million for five more Regional Study Hubs.
- Invest $2 million in the Country Education Partnership’s Rural Inspire initiative.
- Invest in the right infrastructure to connect communities, industry and producers to markets, and to make travel safer.
- Provide further funding through programs that are targeted at improving the regions, such as the Building Better Regions Fund.
- Deliver new Regional Deals to drive local economic growth and create jobs.
- Continue to deliver on our decentralisation agenda.

The Liberal and Nationals Government’s vision is for a regional Australia that provides secure job opportunities, access to the best education choices, quality health services and reliable telecommunications.
OUR PLAN

The Liberal and Nationals Government has delivered for regional Australia. Investment in rural and regional areas has increased, reinforcing its place as an engine room of the economy, contributing $537 billion to annual Gross Domestic Product. Over eight million people now live, work and raise a family outside our capital cities.

We are delivering the infrastructure and vital services that regional communities need to grow their businesses and economies. Investments in road and rail are connecting local regional businesses to national and international markets, and we are delivering essential education, health and telecommunications services that ensure no one is disadvantaged in regional Australia.

There are now more than 600 government initiatives focussed on creating jobs and driving economic growth in Australia’s regions, and since 2013, we have committed over $33 billion to economic and social infrastructure programs that specifically benefit regional areas.

Digital connectivity

A re-elected Liberal and Nationals Government will boost digital connectivity in regional Australia, including eliminating mobile blackspots across 1 million square kilometres by 2025 (an area larger than the size of South Australia).

This means new or improved mobile coverage for tens of thousands more regional Australian households and thousands of kilometres of our roads.

Improved digital connectivity is critical to the future of regional Australia - enabling the growth of industries like agriculture and tourism, supporting health and education services and helping connect regional communities to the rest of Australia and the world.

The 2018 Regional Telecommunications Review examined the communication needs of people living in the regions. It’s clear that access to 21st century communications is more important than ever before, particularly for Australians living in regional and remote areas.

Under the first four rounds of the Mobile Black Spot Program we have generated investment of more than $760 million, with a commitment to deliver a total of 1,047 new base stations across Australia.

This will deliver close to half a million square kilometres of new or improved coverage, benefiting around 40,000 premises and over 8,500km of major roads.
The National Broadband Network is also now 92 per cent complete in regional Australia and by 2020 will provide over 2.7 million regional premises with fixed-line broadband, 600,000 premises with access to fixed wireless services and 400,000 premises with access to improved satellite services.

We are committed to doing even more.

A re-elected Liberal and Nationals Government will deliver our $220 million Stronger Regional Digital Connectivity Package which is fully funded in the 2019-20 Budget.

This will deliver two new rounds of the Mobile Black Spot Program, a new place-based Regional Connectivity Program to provide targeted investments in improving telecommunications infrastructure, a digital tech hub to improve digital literacy and trials of alternative voice services that, in time, could replace the ageing high capacity radio concentrator (HCRC) network in remote areas.

We have secured new policy initiatives and commitments from NBN Co and Telstra to further improve services in the regions. Greater access to mobile services in regional Australia improves the ability to keep in contact with family and friends, allows better access for farmers to online services and digital agriculture, and helps local businesses grow by making these areas more attractive to tourists.

Despite being in Government for six years, Labor did nothing to improve mobile phone coverage in regional Australia.

Education and Skills

Every student deserves the opportunity to have access to a world-class education, no matter where they live.

By building a strong economy, we have been able to deliver more affordable child care, record funding for government, Catholic and independent schools, a new $585 million vocational education skills plan and record investment in a world-class higher education system.

The Liberal and Nationals Government will ensure that children and young Australians in regional Australia have the opportunity to reach their full potential. We are enabling regional families to access high quality early education for their children by supporting child care providers in regional Australia to remain viable and to grow through the Community Child Care Fund. We are providing $69.7 billion over the decade for school students in rural and remote areas, and securing the future for parents whose children are educated in independent and Catholic schools through our $1.2 billion Choice and Affordability Fund, which will assist schools in regional and remote areas and in drought-affected areas. We have put in place over $490 million in programs to support
regional students to go to university.

To increase education opportunities and aspirations in regional Australia, a re-elected Liberal and Nationals Government will invest:

- $15 million for five more Regional Study Hubs which support university students to stay in their local communities whilst they study.
- $2 million in the Country Education Partnership’s Rural Inspire initiative.

We believe that you should be able to attend university whether you are from a regional community or from a capital city. Yet if you are from regional Australia, you are half as likely to attend a tertiary institution as students in cities.

That is why we have created Regional Study Hubs in 22 locations, which are supporting regional students to study in communities where they choose to live. This means that over 2,700 students will now be able to study courses in regional communities.

Five more Regional Study Hubs with additional Commonwealth Supported Places will support more students to remain in their local community whilst getting the skills and qualifications they need for work.

The first of these new Hubs will be established in Wangaratta. We will invite applications for the other four Hubs.

Our investment in the Country Education Partnership’s Rural Inspire initiative will help to inspire and support young people living in rural communities to set their sights high, and achieve their goals.

We know rural students don’t always have access to the necessary information, or career mentors, to support them in making career choices and chasing their dreams. Wangaratta-based Rural Inspire and its Rural Youth Ambassador program work with young people living in rural communities to encourage them to pursue further education, develop their leadership skills, and put forward their voice and ideas to address the challenges they and their communities face.

**Health services**

A stronger economy means the Liberal and Nationals Government can guarantee the essential services Australians rely on.

The Liberal and Nationals Government’s investment in health care is growing year on year – delivering record bulkbilling rates, new life-saving medicines, record funding for hospitals and
more health services for all Australians.

Under the Liberal and Nationals Government, almost nine out of 10 Australians who visit the doctor have no out of pocket costs with GP bulk billing rates at a record 86 per cent, up from 82 per cent under Labor.

Since coming to Government, the Liberal and Nationals Government has invested $10.6 billion to add over 2,000 new medicines listings to the Pharmaceutical Benefit Scheme (PBS). We are subsidising breakthrough medicines such as Spinraza for spinal muscular atrophy, Orkambi for cystic fibrosis and new immunotherapy drugs for cancer. These are medicines that change and save lives.

Ensuring a strong economy has enabled the Liberal and Nationals Government to deliver record funding for public hospital services. Funding has increased by 60 per cent to a record $21 billion in 2018-19.

When Labor left office in 2013, public hospital funding was $13 billion.

Importantly our $503.1 million Youth Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan is the largest suicide prevention plan in Australia’s history and focuses on expanding the headspace network, Indigenous suicide prevention and early childhood and parenting.

The Liberal and Nationals Government is implementing the most comprehensive rural health package in decades, which will improve access to doctors, nurses and other health care services.

That is why we are investing:

- Investing $550 million for the Stronger Rural Health Strategy, which delivers 3,000 additional doctors and more than 3,000 additional nurses and allied health professionals in rural general practice over the next decade.
- $45 million for 13 new regional cancer centres to provide greater access to cancer treatment nearer to home.
- $100 million to establish the Rural and Regional Clinical Trials Infrastructure Program to establish state of the art physical infrastructure and equipment.
- $22.3 million to support more alcohol and other drug treatment and support services in remote, rural and regional areas with an additional 65 specialist service providers operating after-hours and on weekends.
- $4.3 million to provide local support for families, communities and regions struggling with the impacts of illicit drug use.
- $27 million in new funding for more McGrath Foundation Nurses for breast cancer, particularly to support patients in rural and regional areas.
• $94.5 million for a new Murray Darling Medical Schools Network to increase the number of medical students training in rural areas and increase the number of students who then go on to practice in regional and rural Australia.
• $26.6 million to accommodate longer transition arrangements for the changes to rural bulk billing incentives and the Workforce Incentive Program.
• $62.2 million over five years from 2018-19 to implement a National Rural Generalist Pathway.
• $26.9 million in additional support for people in drought and fire affected areas in regional Australia to access additional mental health support, including through telehealth.

Full details of current investments and election commitments for health services are outlined in Our Plan for Strengthening Australia’s World-Class Health System.

**Rewarding hard work and creating jobs**

**Regional Deals**

Regional Australia is diverse and requires a local, ‘place-based’ approach to harness opportunities.

Our regional development policy supports vibrant regional centres, capable of attracting more investment, economic activity and skilled job opportunities.

The Liberal and Nationals Government has led the way with providing a national approach to regional development through policies that encourage a region’s government, businesses and the community to develop local strategies cooperatively.

We strongly believe decisions about the future of individual regions should be made by local people and supported by government, not the other way around. We understand that no one knows their regions better than the people who live and work there.

This approach of ensuring local solutions to local needs is at the core of our Regional Deals: bringing all the key players to the table to decide on priorities and local strategies to support regional planning, governance and investment.

This is why a re-elected Liberal and Nationals Government will continue to roll out Regional Deals whilst continuing to progress the Deals we have already established:

• The $45.4 million Barkly Regional Deal in the Northern Territory will improve the productivity and liveability of the Barkly region by stimulating economic growth and improving social outcomes. We will consult with Indigenous Australians as central and critical stakeholders in the Barkly Regional Deal in recognition of their ongoing connection to country as the custodians and traditional owners of the land.
• The $172.9 million Hinkler Regional Deal in Queensland will capitalise on the opportunities for the region and tackle unemployment, making the most of local strengths and competitive advantages to create more jobs and foster economic development and sustainability.

• The recently announced Albury Wodonga Regional Deal, with initial funding of $3.2 million to undertake strategic governance planning and to inform priorities for the Deal, will be the first cross border deal. It will look at harmonising regulatory and governance barriers faced by these two cities.

It will build on the region’s connectivity and excellence in exports and population growth, bringing together all levels of government to agree on investments that will deliver long term transformation.

A re-elected Liberal and Nationals Government will pursue regional deals in other parts of regional Australia following consultation with states, territories and local governments.

Our Building Better Regions Fund also prioritises local solutions, through giving local councils and community groups the flexibility to bid for the projects based on their own needs and circumstances.

The Liberal and Nationals Government will continue to roll-out this program, starting with a $200 million funding round in the first year of Government. This brings the total commitment since 2013 under the Building Better Regions Fund and National Stronger Regions Fund to almost $1.5 billion.

Local Governments will continue to be supported through Financial Assistance Grants, supporting direct investment in council infrastructure and health, recreation, environmental and employment services. From 2018-19 to 2022-23 $12 billion in Financial Assistance Grants will be provided to 546 local councils across the country.

Decentralisation

The Liberal and Nationals Government is committed to a practical, planned decentralisation agenda to support the growth of our regional areas and better connect government agencies with the communities and people they serve.

The benefits go beyond service delivery. Locating government closer to rural and regional communities and stakeholders supports a greater understanding of the views, needs and experiences of people living and working in rural Australia. Relocation of jobs also stimulates broader job creation and investment in regional communities, adding diversity to regional economies and reducing socioeconomic disparities between major cities and the regions.
Since 2013, over 1700 Federal Government positions have been established or relocated outside of Canberra, inner Sydney and inner Melbourne, including over 1000 positions relocated to regional Australia to support local employment and economic diversification in communities.

This includes a number of regional relocations such as the Australian Maritime Safety Authority with 69 jobs including a regional headquarters at Coffs Harbour and a new office in Airlie Beach, and 16 jobs in Hobart, Cairns, Gladstone, Mackay, Darwin, Geraldton, Karratha and Port Hedland. Recently, a further 76 jobs from the Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) were announced to be relocated closer to basin communities. This will bring more than 100 jobs – a third of the MDBA’s workforce – into operation outside of Canberra by 2021.

We will require portfolios to review and report on their regional staffing footprint annually in the annual Regional Ministerial Budget Statement. And when establishing new agencies, the onus will be on why they should not in the first instance be established in a regional area.

**Agriculture**

The Liberal and Nationals Government has a plan to increase Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to a $100 billion industry by 2030. The industry has a roadmap to do this – our policies will help get them there.

A $100 billion industry means many more jobs in our regional and rural communities.

Our plan to help the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sector reach its potential is focused on:

- Tackling barriers to growth and production.
- Providing the water needed for growth and drought proofing.
- Tackling intergenerational land transfer and encouraging new farmers.
- Expanding exports and improving market access.
- Getting the balance right for the fisheries and forestry industries.

There are challenges, but we’re addressing these too: pests and weeds, external biosecurity threats, climate impacts, changeable consumer preferences and international competition on research and development and commercialisation.

Full details of current investments and election commitments for the agriculture, fisheries and forestry are outlined in Our Plan for a Stronger Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry sector.

**Resources**

Our mining and resources sectors are the building blocks of our national and local economies, and provide the raw materials to create even more jobs in other industries.
The wealth that the resources sector generates helps the Government invest in essential services like schools, hospitals and roads.

Under our Government’s strong economic management the resources sector has boomed, generating an extra $100 billion a year in exports since 2013. Mining accounts for almost 10 per cent of GDP, and drives Australia’s exports. Mining employs over 250,000 Australians and pays the highest wages in our economy, with many of these jobs being in regional and remote Australia.

The Liberal and Nationals Government’s plan is to have the world’s most advanced and successful resources sector that delivers sustained prosperity and social development for all Australians.

Our plan includes a National Resources Statement - Australia’s first resources industry policy framework in over twenty years, a Critical Minerals Strategy to promote investment in Australia’s critical mineral resources, with up to $45 million in R&D grants and $100 million to produce new pre-competitive geoscience data through Geoscience Australia’s Exploring for the Future program. The Junior Minerals Exploration Initiative delivers $100 million to assist junior exploration companies raise additional capital for greenfield exploration programs.

We are also supporting new technologies, skills development and investment. Funding of $100 million has been provided to support the development of hydrogen technologies in Australia. Industry Growth Centres are driving innovation, competitiveness, productivity and sustainability and through the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility (NAIF) the Government is investing $5 billion in loans over five years for infrastructure projects.

**Tourism**

The Liberal and Nationals Government will continue to drive strong growth in the tourism sector, particularly regional tourism, as a key component of our plan to build an even stronger economy. We will:

- Deliver a $50 million National Tourism Icons Package to ensure that Australia’s tourism icons, particularly those in the regions, remain a world class experience for visitors and continue to attract high value tourists.
- Support the tourism industry in regional Australia by continuing to dedicate funding in future rounds of the Building Better Regions Fund for tourism related infrastructure projects.
- Establish a $40 million Indigenous Tourism fund within the Indigenous Advancement Strategy to provide $10 million a year in support of Indigenous owned and operated tourism enterprises.
This will build on the record tourism numbers we’re seeing:

- Over the last 5 years, international visitor numbers have grown by 45 per cent while spending by international visitors is up 53 per cent.
- International visitor numbers and spending levels are at record levels with 8.5 million visitors spending $43.9 billion in 2018.

This tourism boom is creating new jobs and driving economic growth – nearly 45,000 tourism jobs have been created under the Liberal and Nationals Government. Tourism employs 1 in 13 workers, with a large share employed in small and family businesses.

Tourism is especially important for regional Australia, with 43 cents of every visitor dollar spent in the regions.

Building on the Government’s highly successful Tourism 2020 strategy, the Government’s Beyond Tourism 2020 strategy will have a strong focus on increasing regional dispersal of international tourists beyond the traditional gateway destinations of Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane/Gold Coast.

Full details of current investments and election commitments for tourism are outlined in Our Plan to Back Australian Tourism and Jobs.

**Building infrastructure**

The Liberal and Nationals Government will continue to deliver critical infrastructure to help regional economies prosper and grow. This infrastructure – roads, rail and air – connects regional communities and enables farmers and regional businesses to deliver their products to domestic and international markets.

The Liberal and Nationals Government has outlined a $100 billion transport infrastructure plan for the next decade. Our investments will collectively support more than 50,000 direct and indirect jobs, providing opportunities for all tiers of the construction sector, including local businesses and higher levels of participation for Indigenous suppliers and workers.

We have identified strategic corridors under the $4.5 billion Roads of Strategic Importance initiative to provide funding to vital regional freight and tourism corridors. And we will upgrade major highways and road networks across regional Australia by investing $1 billion in the Princes Highway and $400 million in the Newell Highway – building on other works already well-advanced such as the $10 billion Bruce Highway and $8.2 billion Pacific Highway upgrades.

With about 65 per cent of road crash deaths occurring in regional and remote areas, a focus on road safety is essential. In the 2019-20 Budget we committed an additional $2.2 billion for a
dedicated Local and State Government Road Safety Package to focus on road maintenance and upgrades of our roads, particularly in regional areas. In addition, the Liberal and Nationals Government is establishing a new Office of Road Safety to increase national leadership and coordination on road safety policy and initiatives.

The Liberal and Nationals Government is committed to ensuring the once-in-a-generation Inland Rail project delivers for regional Australians and enhances the national economy, moving freight more efficiently to markets here and overseas. It is funded and we are getting on with it. Inland Rail is a strategic investment in Australia’s freight future, supporting the transport network required to serve freight transport, regional producers and related industries for the next century and beyond. The 1,700 kilometre rail line will connect Melbourne and Brisbane, through regional Australia, in less than 24 hours.

But to deliver Inland Rail we must work in close consultation with regional communities and landowners. Greenfield infrastructure developments of this scale are challenging and it is essential that uncertainty for the community is resolved as quickly as possible and that local insights are a key input to the specific route selection and detailed design.

In addition to regional road and rail initiatives, we will deliver an additional $100 million to upgrade safety and access at regional airports. These airports are vital for our regions, ensuring access to emergency services and providing a link to domestic and international markets and employment opportunities. The Regional Airports Program will ensure airport facilities meet the needs of communities and local industry now and into the future.

**Backing regional businesses to access all markets**

The Liberal and Nationals Government has an ambitious trade agenda - because opening new markets and improving our trade conditions means more exports, more jobs and a stronger economy.

New export deals agreed since 2013 (including TPP-11, China, Japan and Korea) have provided Australian farmers and businesses improved access to 1.76 billion customers and have reduced or eliminated tariffs on key Australian exports such as beef, dairy, wheat, sugar and a range of resource products.

The Liberal and Nationals Government is backing regional businesses and helping them access markets. At the 2019-20 Federal Budget, we announced a $60 million boost to the Export Market Development Grants (EMDG) scheme. This is the second time that our government has boosted funding to the EMDG. Due to our stronger economy and strong budget position, by 2022 we will have delivered $180 million in additional funding for EMDG programs since 2013 and have honoured our commitment to restore the $100 million in funding the Labor Party ripped out of it.
To ensure Australian businesses are well placed to take advantage of expanding opportunities, Australia’s trade promotion agency, Austrade, has conducted 122 Free Trade Seminars since March 2015, including 78 in regional areas.

Since 2015, we’ve established Trade Start export assistance offices across Australia, in partnership with state, territory and local governments, industry associations and chambers of commerce. We have increased the number of advisers based on the ground in communities across Australia to 34.

These advisers are providing one on one support for the growing number of Australian businesses that are now exporting.

**Lower energy costs**

The Liberal and Nationals Government is committed to lower power prices.

We understand rising power prices have hurt Australian families and prevented small businesses from employing more people and expanding.

The Liberal and Nationals Government is taking strong action to lower prices and we are already seeing results.

On 1 July 2019, 800,000 Australian families and small businesses will benefit from lower electricity prices by moving to default market offer electricity contract saving households up to $481 in South Australia and up to $663 in NSW and South East Queensland.

We are providing $365 million for Energy Assistance Payments of $75 for singles and $125 for couples to 4 million eligible social security payment recipients – to help with their next power bill and cost of living expenses.

The $50.4 million Regional and Remote Communities Reliability Fund will support up to 50 off-grid and fringe-of-grid communities and businesses to investigate whether establishing a micro grid is cost-effective and whether existing off-grid capabilities can be upgraded with modern technology. The program will allow communities to improve their local transmission, install community-scale batteries to support existing generation (such as solar), or upgrade existing facilities such as old diesel generators.

The Liberal and Nationals Government is backing investment in new power generation – improving competition by underwriting new reliable energy.

The Government has selected a shortlist of 12 projects – six renewable pumped hydro, five gas and one coal upgrade. Together, they represent around 4,000 megawatts of new generation (the
equivalent of powering one million homes).

Importantly, the projects deliver a balance of renewable, affordable and reliable power for families and businesses and ensure we meet our 2030 targets.

This program builds on the Government’s investments in Australia’s world-class, reliable hydroelectricity with Snowy 2.0 and Battery of the Nation.

The Liberal and Nationals Government has a clear plan to reduce power prices for families and businesses. In contrast, independent modelling confirms that by 2030 Labor’s reckless emissions policies will reduce the average full time wage by $9,000 in real terms, reduce the number of jobs by more than 330,000 and increase wholesale electricity prices by 58 per cent. These are industries located across regional Australia.

Labor’s policies will also increase the cost of family SUVs and tradies’ utes by $5,000. Full details of current investments and election commitments for lowering energy are outlined in Our Plan for Lower Energy Costs for Small Businesses.

**Water and the Environment**

We need the states to work more closely with the Australian Government to better capture and store water – as well as protect our communities from devastating flood.

A re-elected Liberal and Nationals Government will establish the National Water Grid – a statutory authority responsible for the strategic planning and project management of water policy and water infrastructure across the nation.

The National Water Grid will:

- Bring together the world’s best scientists to remove the politics from the allocation, capture and storage of water – ensuring decisions are based on the best available science.
- Develop a pipeline of all established and future water infrastructure projects and then identify the missing links. Use the best science to examine how large-scale water diversion projects could be established to deliver reliable and cost-effective water to farmers and regional communities.

Full details are outlined in Our Plan for a Stronger Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry sector.

The Liberal and Nationals Government will continue to put Landcare at the centre of our environmental management through our $1 billion National Landcare Program. We believe the best way to protect the environment is by working in partnership. This will be complemented by
our new $100 million Environment Restoration Fund.

A re-elected Liberal and Nationals Government will implement a comprehensive $167 million Australian Recycling Investment plan to increase Australia’s recycling rates, tackle plastic waste and litter, accelerate work on a new battery recycling scheme and continue action to halve food waste by 2030.

We will also invest $30 million in a pilot Agriculture Biodiversity Stewardship Fund to provide incentives to farmers to boost biodiversity and reduce emissions. This will reward farmers who look after biodiversity on their farm and give them more motivation to maintain and enhance bushland, regenerate waterways and plant native trees.

Full details of current investments and election commitments for the environment are outlined in Our Plan for a Cleaner Environment.

THE CHOICE

The Liberals and Nationals want to ensure people living in regional Australia benefit from our growing economy by having the opportunity to get secure, better paid jobs, access high-quality health, education and communication services, and to live in vibrant regional communities.

Regional Australians aren’t on Labor’s radar. Labor doesn’t understand the regions, because they don’t live there.

Bill Shorten hitting regional households with billions of dollars in new and higher taxes, Labor has no plan to invest dedicated funding in regional communities.

Labor has:
- No plan for regional jobs – just a plan for higher taxes on family businesses and electricity.
- No plan for agricultural industries and jobs – just a plan to lock up farms, strip farmers of their right to farm and deny drought affected communities access to our $3.9 billion Future Drought Fund.
- No plan for resources industries and jobs – just a plan to shut down key mining operations, force mass transition sackings and prevent new mining investment.
- No plan for regional health – just a track record of not funding lifesaving medicines on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.
- No plan to upgrade local roads – just a plan that will increase the cost of popular regional vehicles by up to $5,000 and attempt to make people in regional areas reliant on electric vehicles when they drive the furthest and have no charging infrastructure.
- Continued to adopt Greens policies by promising to establish a new EPA. This comes on top of their announcement they would expand damaging Queensland-style vegetation
management laws across the country, hurting Australian farmers. There are still many unanswered questions on what Labor’s new laws would entail and how they would impact the Australian economy and jobs.

Regional Australians know that Labor will mean new and higher taxes, including:
- A $57 billion Retirees Tax that would directly affect 900,000 individuals, 200,000 self-managed super funds and 1,800 super funds.
- $31 billion of Housing Taxes that would reduce home values, push up rents and hurt Australia’s economy. It would also impact more than 1.3 million Australian investors who negatively gear.
- $236.5 billion of additional income taxes.
- $27 billion of higher taxes on family businesses directly affecting around 300,000 small businesses.

Labor wants small family businesses in regional Australia to be taxed at the same rate as large multinational companies – family businesses that use trusts for asset protection, estate planning and cash flow.

Regional Australia can’t risk turning back to a Labor Government.

That would cost regional Australia twice: first when the cost of doing business goes up; and second when the nation’s economy weakens and regional businesses can’t afford to keep employing.

Under Labor, personal and business taxes will be higher not lower. Labor’s track record tells you there will be budget deficits instead of surpluses. A reckless emissions reduction target instead of a responsible one. Policy based on envy rather than aspiration. Union muscle rather than the rule of law. Mr Shorten will take Australia in a very different direction. It will be an economic leap in the dark for regional Australia.

Only the Liberal and Nationals Government has a plan that backs regional Australia with better services and practical plans to ensure that regional Australia thrives. Only the Liberal and Nationals Government is investing in regional Australia because we know the importance of its role in building Australia’s economic growth.

**THE COST**

There are now over 600 initiatives focused on creating jobs and economic growth in regional Australia. We will invest an additional $17 million in education initiatives in regional Australia.