

25 June 2014

To the Ordinary Council Meeting

Councillor

1.6 Mayoral Minute – Joint Wyong Gosford Delegation to Canberra to Discuss Regional Development

TRIM REFERENCE: F2012/00189 - D09490232

MANAGER:

AUTHOR: Doug Eaton; Councillor

Last week while in Canberra to attend the National Assembly for Local Government in Canberra, Council organised a series of meetings with Federal Government Ministers.

Along with CEO of Gosford City Council Paul Anderson, we put forward a strong case for increased support and investment in the Central Coast, focusing on infrastructure and specific initiatives that can make a difference to our local economy.

The five meetings included:

- Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, Jamie Briggs
- Minister for Education, Christopher Pyne
- Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Communication, Paul Fletcher
- Representatives for the Treasurer Joe Hockey
- Chief of Staff for Minister for Infrastructure Warren Truss

The meetings were extremely positive with a series of actions agreed on both sides to help progress a range of issues.

In the meeting with Mr Briggs we put forward the case for Federal funding assistance for a range of projects around Warnervale – including the proposed link road connecting North Wyong to Warnervale and communicated our strong support from the NorthConnex tunnel to link the M1 and M2 which will provide significant benefits to our residents including reducing long travel times.

Minister Briggs indicated future Federal funding support for the link road subject to State Government funding.

The widening of the M1 between Tuggerah and Doyalson, as well as Kariong and Somersby, and the upgrade of entry and exit ramps along this route, were other great transport initiatives we said were very important to our residents.

The meeting with Minister for Education, Christopher Pyne, was very productive. He indicated that he was genuinely interested in our plans for improving education, and after viewing our proposal for an education precinct in Warnervale, agreed that technical support would be given to assist us to advance our proposal.

Minister Pyne explained that the Government is extending taxpayer subsidies, per student, to non-university higher-education providers creating a financial shot in the arm to the Central Coast's four TAFEs, as well as removing the cap on diplomas and associate degrees so that universities—like the University of Newcastle—which offer a high number of this type of qualification at the Ourimbah campus, will be able to expand their offerings to students opening up the educational opportunities and pathways for students from a lower-socioeconomic-status backgrounds.

1.6 **Mayoral Minute – Joint Wyong Gosford Delegation to Canberra to Discuss Regional Development (contd)**

Even if University of Newcastle does not take up these opportunities, competition in the market will allow new entrants to compete. In essence, the deregulated system supports our proposal for alternative higher education, for example at Warnervale, to succeed.

On Tuesday, we also met with Paul Fletcher, to discuss solutions to the Coast's mobile phone blackspots and the need for better broadband services to ensure our Shire is competitive with other cities and regions when trying to attract the type of industries we are targeting - including universities, aviation and logistics businesses.

We agreed to investigate what Council-owned infrastructure can be used to help deliver mobile and internet services, particularly in those rural areas that suffer the most.

Plans for a Central Coast Regional Airport were the topic of Wednesday's meeting with Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development Warren Truss' Chief of Staff.

Given that the Central Coast is the ninth largest region in Australia but the only one not to have a regional airport to support the local population and economy, the Federal Government's support for a regional airport is essential to getting it built and operational by 2020.

I'm pleased to be able to report back that we got a very strong message of support around the airport proposal and Council will now write formally to the Minister to trigger technical and planning assistance from the Government.

The meeting with representatives from the office of the Treasurer, Joe Hockey, provided no concrete outcomes, however Council's case for support was heard and a package of information on the various initiatives proposed was provided.

At the National General Assembly of Local Government, two of the items submitted by Council were supported, with the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) to call on the Commonwealth Government to establish a Regional Australia Tourism program to support and fund regional and rural council's tourism efforts.

ALGA will also call for a review of the structure, operation and funding arrangements for Regional Development Australia to ensure they align with the strategic directions of Local Government.

The keynote address at the National Assembly was given by The Hon. Warren Truss MP, in his capacity as Local Government Minister. He spoke of the impact on the carbon tax on local government adding hundreds of millions of dollars to operating costs and the doubling of the Roads to Recovery funding and tripling of the Black Spots program to address dangerous roads.

Minister Truss continued this theme in Parliament, directly referencing the impact of the carbon tax on Wyong Shire Council in Question Time on Monday 16 June, and the we were referenced again on the 19 June by Minister Pyne in regards to the need for education funding and reform.

All up it was a very notable week in Canberra for Wyong Shire Council with our issues listened and responded to and our initiatives well-received with plenty of follow up actions to keep us moving ahead in the coming months.

1.6 Mayoral Minute – Joint Wyong Gosford Delegation to Canberra to Discuss Regional Development (contd)

On behalf of Council, I would like to put on record my appreciation for the efforts of the Member for Dobell, Karen McNamara MP, and Member for Robertson, Lucy Wicks MP, for organising these important meetings.

I formally move:

That Council receive and note the Mayoral Minute – Joint Wyong-Gosford Delegation to Canberra 2014

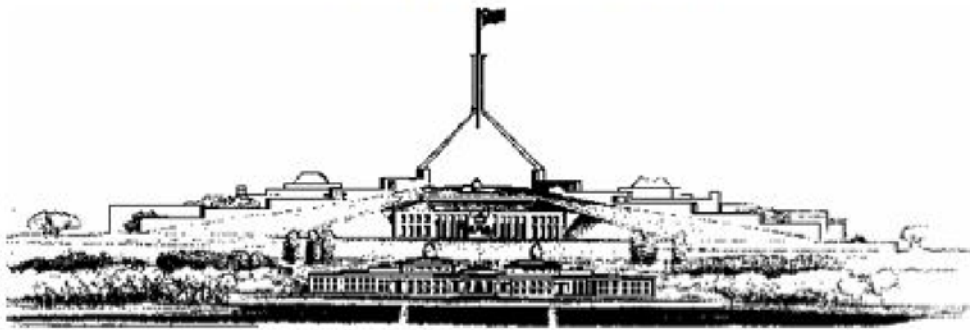
ATTACHMENTS

- | | | |
|---|---|-----------|
| 1 | Higher Education Question - NGA Canberra 2104 | D09490240 |
| 2 | WSC Carbon Tax Question - NGA Canberra 2014 | D09490273 |



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PROOF

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Higher Education

QUESTION

Wednesday, 18 June 2014

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, 18 June 2014

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

59

QUESTION

Date Wednesday, 18 June 2014
Page 59
Questioner Wicks, Lucy, MP
Speaker

Source House
Proof Yes
Responder Pyne, Christopher, MP
Question No.

Higher Education

Higher Education

Mrs WICKS (Robertson) (14:40): My question is to the Minister for Education. Will the minister inform the House how the government's higher-education reforms, announced in the budget, will help more students gain a higher-education qualification on the New South Wales Central Coast and in other regional areas?

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House and Minister for Education) (14:41): I thank the member for Robertson for her question. Yesterday I was very fortunate to meet with the mayors of Wyong and Gosford, from the New South Wales Central Coast, who are both very ably represented by the member for Dobell and the member for Robertson, very ably represented by them both. They were very pleased to hear how the government's higher-education reforms will be of such enormous benefit to a regional area like the Central Coast of NSW.

It will be of benefit in three particular ways. They were very pleased to hear that because we are extending taxpayer subsidies, per student, to non-university higher-education providers that will be a financial shot in the arm to the four TAFEs that exist on the Central Coast of New South Wales; and on National TAFE Day it is good to be able to explain to TAFEs that they will get a large financial support out of the government, because of that first aspect of our reforms.

Secondly, of course, we are removing the cap on diplomas and associate degrees so that universities—like the University of Newcastle—which offer a high preponderance of such associate degrees and diplomas, especially on the Central Coast, will be able to expand their offerings to students in an area that will service, eventually, 400,000 people on the NSW Central Coast. That will be a widening of opportunity to more students, particularly for those of low-socioeconomic-status backgrounds, who typically use those kinds of courses to go into undergraduate degrees and find a pathway to university.

Finally, if the University of Newcastle does not take up the opportunity of both the lifting of the cap and the expansion of the Commonwealth Grant Scheme's

non-university higher education providers, then the competition that we have created in the market will allow new entrants into the Central Coast of New South Wales to compete with the University of Newcastle, so forcing the University of Newcastle to, in fact, offer those courses—if they want to keep their market—or the new providers, using the new freedoms of a deregulated system, will be able to give low-SES young people on the New South Wales Central Coast the opportunity to get a higher-education qualification and improve their chances of increasing their income over a lifetime.

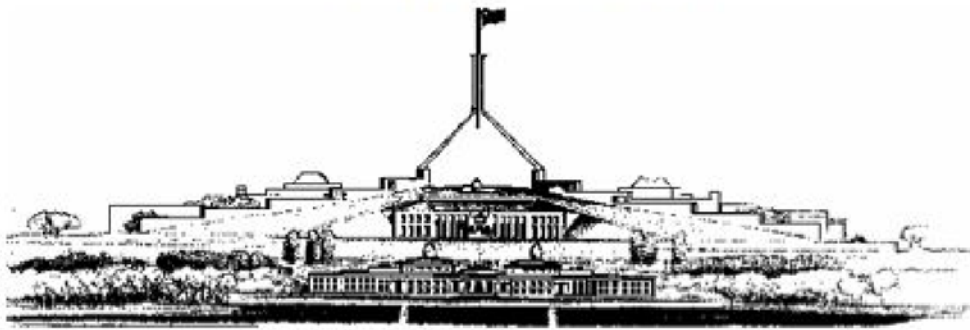
It is very good news for regional Australia, in the higher-education reforms, and the mayors were very pleased to see it. These two measures alone are costing \$820 million. So our priorities are to put \$820 million into higher education. Labor's priority is to spend \$1 billion a month—being sent to debtors overseas—to pay the interest alone on the government's debt that was left to us by Labor. Labor's priority is a billion dollars a month in interest repayments; ours is \$820 million to expand opportunity.

CHAMBER



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PROOF

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Carbon Pricing

QUESTION

Monday, 16 June 2014

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, 16 June 2014

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

45

QUESTION

Date Monday, 16 June 2014
Page 45
Questioner McNamara, Karen, MP
Speaker

Source House
Proof Yes
Responder Truss, Warren, MP
Question No.

Carbon Pricing

Carbon Pricing

Mrs McNAMARA (Dobell) (14:11): My question is to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development. I remind the Deputy Prime Minister that Wyong Shire Council in my electorate faces a bill of close to \$5 million this year, growing to \$10 million in coming years, because of Labor's carbon tax. Will the minister outline how axing this tax will assist local governments to deliver better roads and essential services?

Mr TRUSS (Wide Bay—Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development) (14:12): I thank the honourable member for Dobell for her question. When local government is assembling in Canberra for their national convention—

Mr Albanese interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Grayndler will desist.

Mr TRUSS: it is particularly relevant that we should talk about the impact of the carbon tax on councils right across the country. The example of Wyong Council, sadly, is repeated right across the nation. The carbon tax is impacting on councils, and therefore raising the cost of rates, right across the nation. At every level the councils are hit with carbon tax, in everything they do. There are a number of indirect costs, such as higher electricity costs, as a direct result of the carbon tax. Indeed, as I understand from Treasury modelling of the council's costs at Wyong, electricity costs are between \$3.4 million and \$4.2 million higher as a result of Labor's carbon tax.

Then, of course, because Labor plans to increase the carbon tax every year, in just 15 days time all of those costs will go up. They will keep going up and up and up if Labor have their way. They want an increasing carbon tax to add more burden and more pain to Australia's ratepayers. It affects directly, also, those councils like Wyong that have a significant garbage disposal facility.

Mr Bowen interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for McMahon.

Mr TRUSS: The Buttonderry Waste Management Facility in that region is already having to pay the carbon tax because of the emissions it generates. As a result—

Mr Perrett interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Moreton will desist.

Mr TRUSS: the waste management rates in Wyong are \$22 higher, already, than they ought to be as a result of Labor's carbon tax. And they will keep going up.

Every time the council goes out to grade a road, or to build a new road, or even to mow the grass on the median strip, Labor's carbon tax is there adding to the costs of all those people who are involved. All those people are affected.

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Prime Minister will resume his seat. The member for Grayndler on a point of order.

Mr Albanese: Madam Speaker, I raise a point of order on relevance. In order to be relevant, the minister has to indicate what the increased price of his new petrol tax hike will be.

The SPEAKER: The member will resume his seat. There is no point of order. It is a wide-ranging question. The Deputy Prime Minister has the call.

Mr TRUSS: I appreciate that the honourable member is embarrassed about the way in which Labor is imposing unnecessary costs on the ratepayers of Australia.

Mr Brendan O'Connor interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Gorton will desist.

Mr TRUSS: If Labor had its way we would be debating in the parliament today legislation to spread the carbon tax's net to also cover road transport fuels, adding more and more to the imposition of costs that councils have to bear. The reality is we have been elected with a mandate to get rid of this tax, to get rid of this imposition on rates, to get rid of this cost on ratepayers. Labor should recognise that mandate, join us in the Senate to make sure that this tax is repealed and let local government get on with its job.

CHAMBER