



**Welcome to the Autumn Newsletter**

We are now in the first year of a federal ALP government.- the goal of winning the election and seeing a Rudd /Gillard leadership team has been achieved. So many people across the country worked hard - SO HARD - for this result and now the work must be continued to make sure that strong Labor policies are implemented in a period when there will be significant financial pressures and constraints. The challenge for Labor Governments is always to balance between the great expectations often developed over years of being out of power, and the reality of governing the country.

The Rudd/Gillard government has achieved much in the first months – the Kyoto Protocol, the long-awaited Apology to Indigenous Australians, work on electoral reform, the Workplace Relations Bill – a report card on the first 100 days is on the website. An important element is the commitment to continue to report to the community and to be accountable for decisions and policy – this link is essential in responsible government and is the hallmark of Rudd Labor.

I want to particularly mention two issues – the indigenous welcome to Parliament was a wonderful experience, now enshrined in our Parliamentary protocol – it is amazing that it took until 2008 for this important element to be established in the Federal parliament. This action, linked with the long awaited formal apology/ acknowledgement of the Australia's

first peoples, has completed a necessary journey for all of us, while clearly being the first step of the continuing process of real reconciliation in our country.

The other personal highlight for me amidst the hectic programme of government, was the acknowledgement of International Women's Day at the Suffrage Fountain, Old Parliament House. Our Minister for Women, Tanya Plibersek, welcomed women to this important place where the Prime Minister, his partner and 2 senior women from our Parliament, Tanya and Jenny Macklin celebrated the role of women in our society, workplace and government – the speeches are on my website.

Thank you to all the people who worked to realise a great election result. Thank you for your ongoing support and challenges – the Labor government is made stronger by you. I need to particularly acknowledge the Trade Union Movement – the efforts of the Your Rights at Work teams were extraordinary – we need them to continue as always.



**What's On?**

13 May Federal Budget

**Parliamentary Sitings**

- 13-15 May - Senate
- 26-29 June - Estimates
- 2 - 5 June - Estimates
- 16-26 July - Senate

**Claire's Committees**

- Community Affairs [Chair]
- Finance and Public Administration
- Foreign Affairs Defence & Trade
- Parliamentary Group on Population Development
- Regulations and Ordinances
- Housing Affordability
- Regional and Remote Indigenous Communities



**NEWS FLASH**



Government to commit \$2.5 million to Tree of Knowledge.



The Rudd Labor Government will convene an *Australia 2020* Summit at Parliament House on 19 & 20 April to debate and develop long-term options for the nation across 10 critical areas: Future directions for the Australian economy;

Economic infrastructure, the digital economy and the future of our cities; Population, sustainability, climate change, and water; Future directions for rural industries and rural communities; A long-term national health strategy; Strengthening communities, supporting families and social inclusion; Options for the future of indigenous Australia; Towards a creative Australia: the future of the arts, film and design; The future of Australian governance; Australia's future security and prosperity in a rapidly changing region and world.

All Australians have been invited to make submissions on each of the 10 future challenges. Across the country have been convened to encourage debate and discussion, the results of which will be part of the National Process.

**Apology to Australia's Indigenous People** On Wednesday 13 February 2008 Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, rose to his feet in the House of Representatives and offered, on behalf of the Parliament, an Apology to Australia's Indigenous People.

This fulfilled a commitment made prior to the federal election in November 2007 that, if elected, the Labor Government would apologise to those Indigenous Australians who had been mistreated in the past, especially those who were part of the Stolen Generations. The apology was extended to those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who were removed from their families, their communities and their country; it covered the laws and policies of successive Parliaments and governments that had inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on our fellow Australians.

The Prime Minister went on to say " We the Parliament of Australia respectfully request that this apology be received in the spirit in which it is offered as part of the healing of the nation.



## Autumn Newsletter from Senator Claire Moore

### Senate Committees

The election of the Rudd Labor Government changed the composition of Senate Committees, Senator Claire Moore was appointed Chair of the Senate Community Affairs Committee.

The Committee has four current inquiries:

*Mental Health Services in Australia* - the committee is examining the extent that the National Action Plan on Mental Health is assisting the achievement of aims of the National Mental Health Strategy. The committee is also examining the progress of implementing the recommendations of the report "A national approach to mental health - from crisis to community.". Report to be completed by **26 June 2008**.

*Alcohol Toll Reduction Bill* - the committee is examining proposals in the Bill that would require health information on alcohol products, restriction on media advertising, advertisements to be approved by a government body and the banning of advertising that links alcohol to success.

*Poker Machine Harm Reduction Tax* - the committee is examining the proposal to introduce a federal tax on poker machines in pubs and clubs to restrict the machines to casinos and racetracks. Submissions close **13 June 2008**.

*[Northern Territory] Emergency Response Consolidation Bill* - is being examined as it seeks to: repeal the permit system, require television channels not to contain a large amount of R18+ programming into certain areas, permit the transportation of pornographic material through prescribed areas to a place outside the prescribed area, ensures that roadhouses acting as community stores have to meet new licensing standards. Submissions close **13 April 2008**.

Claire is also a member of these committees:

- Finance and Public Administration Standing Committee
- Joint Standing Committee Foreign Affairs Defence and Trade
- Parliamentary Group on Population and Development
- Senate Standing Committee on Regulations and Ordinances— no terms of reference
- Senate Select Committee on Housing Affordability in Australia
- Senate Select Committee on Regional and Remote Indigenous Communities—no terms of reference

The Housing Affordability committee is examining the barriers to home ownership. The examination will cover the taxes and levies imposed; the rate of release of new land; proposed assistance for first home owners and the effectiveness in the absence of increased supply; the role of all levels of government in facilitating affordable home ownership; the effect on the market of government intervention in the housing sector including planning and industrial relations laws; the role of financial institutions in home lending; and the contribution of home ownership to retirement incomes. Report to be completed by 16 June 2008.

Submissions for Senate inquiries are welcomed from members of the general public. Information can be found at [www.aph.gov.au](http://www.aph.gov.au) or by calling the office on (07) 3881 3710.

The Senate Community Affairs Committee has produced their first report for this parliament.

The report "*A Decent Quality of Life- Inquiry into the cost of living pressures on older Australians*" was tabled to the Senate on 20 March 2008. We have copies available, please phone (07) 3881 3710. Copies are also available online: [www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/clac\\_ctte/older\\_austs\\_living\\_costs/report/report.pdf](http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/clac_ctte/older_austs_living_costs/report/report.pdf)

### ELECTION RESULTS ELECTION RESULTS ELECTION RESULTS

**Queensland** for the first time in recent history has returned three Labor Senators in the half senate election. Senators John Hogg & **Claire Moore** were re-elected for the next six year term and Mark Furner (pictured) was elected as the third Labor senator, with Senators Joe Ludwig and Jan McLucas the Labor Senate ticket has increased in strength. Mark takes up office in July 2008.

**CONGRATULATIONS** to all those Labor members elected to the House of Representatives for the 42nd Federal Parliament. Those re-elected - Hon Kevin Rudd [Griffith], Hon Wayne Swan [Lilley], Hon Arch Bevis [Brisbane], Hon Dr Craig Emerson [Rankin], Kirsten Livermore [Capricornia], Bernie Ripoll [Oxley] and those newly elected - James Bidgood [Dawson], Yvette D'Ath [Petrie], Shayne Neumann [Blair], Graham Perrett [Moreton], Brett Raguse [Forde], Kerry Rea [Bonner], Jon Sullivan [Longman], Chris Trevor [Flynn] and Jim Turnour [Leichhardt].



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