

**Senator Claire Moore**

**WEEKLY UPDATE: 26th, October 2018**

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**Today we recognise teachers and  
educators all over Queensland.  
Happy World Teachers' Day.**



**THIS WEEK:**

*The aftermath of the Wentworth by-election may have obscured a powerful and emotional moment in our history when the Australian Parliament said sorry on behalf of the nation to all those who suffered from the tragic history of institutional child sexual abuse.*

*It was a very special, powerful and wonderful moment.*

*However, it can never heal the scars inflicted on all those young children and teens that were so outrageously abused.*

*Some never got to see this day.*

*The apology is also not the end of the matter for this is unfinished business and we must be diligent in ensuring the national redress scheme functions with decency, fairness and justice. Its full course is yet to be charted and there are still many ways that scheme can be improved.*

*Many institutions are still yet to sign up and already as revealed in Senate estimates this week there are claims that staff engaged in administering the redress scheme "didn't have the appropriate skills to deal with individuals who had been traumatised".*

*As my colleague Linda Burney said this week; "The National Apology marks not the end, but the beginning of the process for delivering restitution and support for victims and survivors of institutional child sexual abuse. Survivors have been through so much and have waited so long. It is absolutely imperative that we get the rollout of National Redress Scheme right."*

*Nor should any of us forget what has happened and the damage done.*

*As a community we must remain vigilant to make sure these things never, ever happen again.*

*Remember this redress scheme does not respond to all victims who were abused in institutional care...the real unfinished business is to ensure all victims are recognised and abuse is not just sexual.*



**SENATOR CLAIRE MOORE, LABOR SENATOR FOR QUEENSLAND**

**Senator Claire Moore**  
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## WHAT'S BEING SAID ...



### CLIMATE CHANGE - BUTLER – CANBERRA

"We've seen this morning an open letter from the nation's leading health experts, including Nobel Laureate Peter Doherty, Australian of the Year Fiona Stanley, and many others who have called the Government's response to the IPCC Scientific Report on Climate Change, to use their words "unacceptable."

We've also seen the regular biannual survey of company directors for the first time place climate change, or action on climate change, at the top of the list of challenges that company directors think the Federal Government should be acting on."

### CLIMATE CHANGE - BUTLER – CANBERRA

"The only new thing in the announcements from Scott Morrison and Angus Taylor this week has been the so-called divestment policy. This has nothing to do with consumers. If it did the ACCC would have recommended it in their report. They considered the question and they clearly rejected it because it has no benefit for consumers at all."

### CLIMATE CHANGE - BUTLER – CANBERRA

"When they say 'fair-dinkum power' that is code, that is signalling to the right-wing of the Coalition party room that this Government wants to put taxpayers money on the line to build new coal-fired power stations that the industry itself says for very obvious reasons are "uninvestable."

### CLIMATE CHANGE - BUTLER – CANBERRA

"Just applying the sorts of arrangements that exist in the UK, for example, under a conservative government or are being rolled out in Canada under a conservative government, you are talking about billions and billions of dollars in indemnity for just a single coal-fired power station. So I call on Angus Taylor and the Treasurer to be open with the people about quite what an indemnity would involve for taxpayers to foot."

### NAURU CHILDREN - KENEALLY - SKY NEWS

"In the past haven't accepted that proposition, but in the sake of compromise, in the sake of working to get a solution here, and the sake of getting the right outcome for children, we are willing to work with the government. The government is not even having this conversation. Scott Morrison is not even coming to the table."

### GOV'T'S NAURU SOLUTION - PLIBERSEK – ABC RN BREAKFAST

"What their legislation says is that no one who has ever come to Australia on a boat for example, doesn't matter where they move to in the world will ever be allowed to even visit Australia on a tourist visa, they could have a dying relative in Australia they wouldn't be able to visit. They could join the Olympic Team of their adopted nation, they wouldn't be able to visit, they could become the President or the Prime Minister of that country and they would never be able to come to Australia. It is ridiculous, absurd, overreach."

### GOV'T'S NAURU SOLUTION - KENEALLY – CANBERRA

"Children on Nauru are not getting the medical attention that they need. Children on Nauru are suffering. Children on Nauru have committed no crime. They deserve the same medical care and compassion that children anywhere deserve. There is one person standing between the children on Nauru getting off Nauru, and that is the Prime Minister Scott Morrison."

### DROUGHT- KENEALLY - SKY NEWS

"Well, let's observe that we're now in our seventh year of drought. This government has been in office for some six years, and just now they've decided to hold a Drought Summit."

### DROUGHT- FITZGIBBON – CANBERRA

"The trouble is this is just an accounting trick, designed to generate a big dollar headline for the Government. Some \$5 billion. It is fake money until it is allocated to a program. If it is going to spend \$100 million a year after 2020, which seems a long way away, then it will be less money than the Government claims it is currently spending on drought measures."

### POWER PRICES - BUTLER – CANBERRA

"Yesterday we had another lie from the Morrison Government that people should expect an \$832 cut in their power bills because of the announcements that the Government made yesterday."

Let's be clear. The only announcement the Government made yesterday was a position that Bill Shorten and Malcolm Turnbull agreed ten weeks ago, and that was to adopt a default price offer in the electricity market. The ACCC has said that that policy would deliver a saving of somewhere between \$105 and \$165 dollars per year for about 10-15 per cent of Australians. Now that is good, and we support that. We supported it ten weeks ago and continue to support it. But for Scott Morrison to pretend that households are going to get an \$800 power price relief from this policy is nothing short of another Liberal lie."

### ASIAN LANGUAGES - PLIBERSEK – CANBERRA

"We know that the fastest growing region on earth is right on our doorstep. We know that nine out of every ten of the next billion people who will enter the middle class globally live on our doorstep and to take full advantage of those economic opportunities we need to make sure that more young Australians learn an Asian language and more young Australians are Asia-literate."

Today we are announcing that we would provide up to 100 scholarships each year for people who are native speakers of an Asian language or who do really well in high school in their senior schooling in an Asian language. We want them to become Asian language teachers."

### ASIAN LANGUAGES - BOWEN - CANBERRA

"The country next door to us will be the fourth largest economy in the world and we have been going backwards; university after university closing down their Indonesian faculties, more Australian school students learning Bahasa Indonesia in 1972 than do in 2018. We can't let this continue."



### **RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION- PLIBERSEK – CANBERRA**

*“We support any move to prevent discrimination against children in any school, or in any setting. Of course we support that. We're a bit perplexed at why the Government wouldn't offer the same protections to teachers and other school staff. If it's not good to discriminate against kids, how can it be good to discriminate against adults?”*

### **INTERFERENCE AT AUNTY - KENEALLY – CANBERRA**

*“What we learned in Senate Estimates yesterday, from the ABC Acting Director himself, is that the ABC is now at a point that the Liberal-National cuts to its funding mean they will have to cut staff, and they will have to cut programming”*

### **DUTTON'S ELIGIBILITY & KERRYN PHELPS' VOTE - BURKE – ABC RN DRIVE**

*“The last time this was put to a vote it was defeated by one with Peter Dutton casting a vote himself to prevent him from being referred to the High Court.”*

### **VETERANS JUSTICE - RISHWORTH-SKY NEWS**

*“This is the claims system if a veteran is injured. We know that the ANAO report came out in June. It had some pretty big criticisms of how difficult it is for veterans to put a claim in for it to be processed in a timely manner and actually to get the proper support. Veterans tell me that they find it over adversarial.”*

### **CHARITIES - LEIGH – CANBERRA**

*“This week is Charity Fraud Awareness Week, and there's been no bigger fraud perpetrated on the charities of Australia than the appointment of a charities critic to head the charities commission. Let's not remember just in the hours after Australia was celebrating the historic same sex marriage vote, the Coalition snuck out the fact that they were appointing Gary Johns to head the charities commission. Gary Johns is somebody who has a history as a charities critic. He's attacked the Indigenous charity Recognise, the mental health charity Beyond Blue. He's criticised the ability of environmental charities to advocate and called for the repeal of the Charities Act 2013, which would throw Australian charities law back to the 1600s.”*

### **CASH CHARGES - O'CONNOR – CANBERRA**

*“It is a year in fact today when Minister Cash misled the parliament five times in suggesting that her office did not commit a criminal offence by leaking information to the media about police raids on union offices. So, exactly one year ago today a cabinet Minister told the parliament that her office had not committed criminal offences in leaking information to the media about the AWU raids by the police. We of course now know that her office was completely involved, had in fact committed a criminal offence by leaking that information to the media - which of course risks the lives of the police when you do such things, and that is why it is a criminal offence.”*

### **MORRISON'S ETHICS - THISTLETHWAITE - CANBERRA**

*“This week it's been uncovered that he also cut nearly \$200 million from the budget of ASIC, the corporate regulator, who has the job of looking after and prosecuting the banks and people who have been doing the wrong thing by their customers in this industry. That's \$200 million less that this organisation has had to hire people with the expertise to prosecute what's been going on in banking and finance with the corporate greed, rip-offs and scandals.”*

### **COALITION GOVERNMENT - ALBANESE – CANBERRA**

*“This is a government that is just looking for things to fight over. Now they are fighting over whether Malcolm Turnbull should attend an oceans conference in Indonesia. This is just pathetic and it comes at a time whereby this is a government that simply doesn't have policies in key areas. They don't have an energy policy. What they have is platitudes. Platitudes aren't policies. Policies are things that change the economy that drive that change through.”*

### **COALITION GOVERNMENT - BOWEN- CANBERRA**

*“Now Australia currently does not have an energy policy. This grab-bag of thought bubbles that we've seen over the last week is not an energy policy. We don't have a climate change policy. This is a rolling farce of poor government”*

## **QUOTES OF THE WEEK**

*“This is a government that has no idea why they are there!” - Anthony Albanese*

*“The Government won't even say the word “Paris,” won't even utter the word, it won't leave the Prime Minister's lips.”  
- Chris Bowen*

*“Unsurprisingly those consumed with killing Turnbull's prime ministership, who did not care one little bit if they killed the government as well, lacked the courage to take responsibility for the result.” - Nikki Sava (The Australian)*

*“What was a defensible argument in the past (for keeping children on Nauru) is weakened now with the current facts. The US arrangement is living proof there has not been a resurgence of boats to Australia, and nor will an arrangement with New Zealand. The integrity and strength of our border protection policies will remain.” - Julia Banks Liberal MP*

*“The voices of sick children and their families had been “drowned out by game-playing and delaying of the New Zealand option.” - Julia Banks Liberal MP*

*“People are rejecting this outright cruelty; this idea that you can let children suffer to discourage others from coming,”  
- Dr June Factor –children's author & founder of Befriend a Child in Detention.*

## CURIOUS

David Anderson, the man who would be king at the ABC following the sacking of its Managing Director, Michelle Guthrie, wanted to leave Aunty just a few months ago and asked Guthrie for a redundancy package. He was told no but it's a bit strange for a man who claims to want to lead Aunty out of the wilderness

## CHRISTIAN VALUES

The Morrison Government has challenged the Federal Court's ability to order humanitarian evacuations for dangerously sick refugee children, creating the potential to slow down further evacuations from Nauru. The Sydney Morning Herald reports that, in a case last week, over an 11 year old Iranian girl who had not eaten for over a fortnight and experts warned faced "imminent death", lawyers acting for Home Affairs argued that the Migration Act precludes the Federal Court from any jurisdiction over "transitory persons" Even one of their own, Julia Banks, said in parliament that the government was wrong to argue – as Mr Morrison and Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton have – that children and families are technically not "in detention" in Nauru. "Sure, they're not behind bars and they can walk about freely," she said, but their long and ongoing time in Nauru amounted to "a detention of their mind and their spirit"

*[So that's what these innocent children are – 'transitory people' – moving from life to madness and death under the supervision of so called Christians – it's disgraceful. – David Margan, Editor]*

## JERUSALEM

The Prime Minister's sudden decision to consider moving our Israeli embassy to the disputed territory of Jerusalem was nothing more than a shoddy attempt to save his own skin and avoid defeat in the Wentworth by-election. His attempts to say otherwise are nothing more than a lie.



The facts show it was a captain's call discussed with hardly anyone to the point that the very people in charge of the security of our defence personnel in the Middle East found out about in the media.

No time was given for security planning in the face of a possibly violent reaction to Morrison's bit of electioneering.

Defence Chief General Angus Campbell was asked in a Senate estimates hearing whether he would have preferred he and his commanders learnt about such a significant matter as the possible relocation of Australia's embassy in Israel to Jerusalem before the media were briefed.

In Senate estimates Senator Wong asked: "Is it better practice for you to be advised before the media?"

General Campbell paused for a full 10 seconds, eventually looking upwards before answering, "Yes, Senator."

## AUTISM

The Federal Government has announced the release of the [National Guideline for the Assessment and Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder](#) with the Autism CRC. Please visit the [Minister for Families and Social Services website to read the media release](#). Further information can also be found on the [Autism CRC website](#).

## MORE MORRISON HEALTH CUTS

A dispute between the Commonwealth and the states and territories over health funding has reached critical mass, after the federal government refused to reverse a recalculation that will claw back more than \$600 million allocated to hospitals and health services over the past financial year. Furious state and territory ministers have reached across party lines to unanimously oppose what they see as an effective budget cut, and will now escalate the matter by exercising a dispute resolution clause in the National Health Reform Agreement. Queensland Health Minister Steven Miles said the state's hospitals would be more than \$160 million worse off this year due to the adjustment.

## BRIDGE OF HORRORS



China has opened the world's longest sea bridge – a 55-kilometre span with a 6.7-kilometre tunnel that will make drivers, and their passengers, feel as if they are plummeting into the sea.

The Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge connects the former British territory to the gambling mecca of Macau, via the mainland China city of Zhuhai.

## PUTIN'S WORLD

Domestic violence was already pervasive in Russia. Then in February 2017, parliament decriminalized first instances of battery among family members. Some took this as confirmation that beating their wives is acceptable

Russia doesn't have a national domestic violence law. Some acts of domestic

violence can be prosecuted under the criminal code as assault, but domestic violence isn't seen as any different than assault on the street by a stranger.

The worrying step the government took in February 2017 was to make what protection exists under the criminal code even narrower and weaker. They decriminalized first offenses of what's called "family battery." This was a very serious setback for people living with domestic violence.

Basically, if it is the first time someone is accused of battering a family member or if they haven't been accused of it for a year, it's now treated as an administrative offense – no different from a parking violation. Penalties are a lot milder than for a criminal offense, and most often they get away with a slap on the wrist, like a small fine.

This was like giving a green light to domestic violence. To many, it seemed like the government was officially saying "it is fine to beat up your wife."

## POT & KETTLE

North Korea has accused Australia of being a US "puppet" and deliberately attempting to disturb its peace talks with Seoul by sending a warship to enforce sanctions on the Korean peninsula.

Australian Defence Force chief of joint operations Air Marshall Mel Hupfeld earlier this month announced a warship accompanied by two AP-3C Orion surveillance aircraft will be sent to the contested peninsula as part of a multinational operation.

The decision was attacked by North Korean state media late Thursday in a furious editorial describing Australia as "riff-raff".

### CLIVE PUTIN

Clive Palmer has sent out a clearly misleading political flyer, inferring he has three former prime ministers in his new party's ranks.

The billionaire has rebranded under the United Australia Party – the same name as the conservative party that was dissolved in the 1940s.

And so he's claimed that former Prime Ministers Robert Menzies, Billy Hughes and Joseph Lyons are members of his party!! "The United Australia Party is a party of three former Prime Ministers of Australia who served in times of depression and war," the flyer, supplied to The New Daily by a Queensland reader, stated. "We believe in what they did – putting Australia first and making our country great." Palmer, Putin Trump – Liars, Liars, Liars.

### WATER THEFT - Nick McKenzie & Richard Baker (The Age)

The Nationals' federal treasurer and candidate for the Victorian seat of Shepparton, Peter Schwarz, is accused of gouging much of the \$850,000 he was paid by Australia's largest drought-proofing project.

Mr Schwarz is also accused of then calling in favours when pressed to account for the taxpayer cash.

As Prime Minister Scott Morrison launches his drought summit, leaked government files reveal that Mr Schwarz banked the taxpayer subsidies in November 2011 and then spent years resisting efforts from water officials to get him to either return the money or use it for its intended purpose - saving water.

According to a leaked memo from a lawyer for the Goulburn-Murray Water Authority Mr Schwarz received \$850,505 in 2011 - divided into \$473,000 for on-farm water-saving measures and \$300,000 to buy a neighbouring property - he "failed to perform any of the obligations despite having received the payment ... in full."

### DROWNING THE PACIFIC

Developing nations say a Morrison government snub of the world's biggest climate change fund hampers efforts to cut global carbon pollution and erodes Australia's international reputation.

But the government claims the fund was not operating well and says it is working directly with Pacific neighbours to help them cope with changing weather.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced Australia will cease payments to the United Nations-backed Green Climate Fund, a mechanism under the Paris treaty to help poor nations cut emissions and respond to extreme weather and rising seas.

Australia's high per-capita emissions and coal dependence mean it was expected to be a generous benefactor.

Australia contributed \$200 million in the first funding round and took a leadership role in 2016 when it co-chaired the fund.

But in a radio interview last month Mr Morrison, when asked if Australia would be bound to its climate targets under the Paris agreement, said: "No, we won't ... nor are we bound to go and tip money into that big climate fund. We're not going to do that either. I'm not going to spend money on global climate conferences and all that nonsense."

Fund board member Tosi Mpanu-Mpanu, of the Democratic Republic of Congo, said Australia's stance was "beyond frustrating", particularly in the wake of the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report](#) that this month warned of devastating planetary damage without radical action. "This backtracking from [the] previous commitment by Australia is disappointing," he told Fairfax Media. "Australia is the world's biggest coal exporter ... it has a major responsibility to provide financial support for developing countries to adapt to and mitigate climate change." Mr Mpanu-Mpanu suggested abandoning the fund was in contravention of the Paris accord and said commitments by developing nations to lower emissions under the treaty relied on financial support from nations such as Australia. Parties to the Paris deal will meet in Poland in December to finalise the rules of the treaty and "this decision by Australia will cast a shadow on the process of reaching an agreement", he said.

### ANNIE GET YOUR GUN

Australia has taken its final step towards enabling women to participate in all aspects of Australian Defence Force (ADF) combat operation.

All Australians can now apply and be enlisted into any role within the ADF as long as they can meet all the demands of the role.

This has been made possible by the Civil Law and Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 which passed through the Australian Parliament on 17 October 2018, removing all barriers preventing women from performing combat roles in the ADF from the Sex Discrimination Act 1984.

Australia will also withdraw its reservation on women serving in combat positions from the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), an important moment for women's workforce participation in the ADF.

The ADF began lifting the restrictions on employment categories in 2013 with all ADF employment categories open to current serving ADF women since 2014. Direct entry to all combat roles has been open to women entering the ADF since January 2016.

Since removing restrictions on women in combat roles, Defence has also introduced targets for women in the ADF. By 2023, Defence is aiming for 25 percent in the Navy, 15 percent in the Army and 25 percent in the Air Force. Currently women represent 17.9 percent of the permanent ADF (21.2 percent in the Navy, 14.3 percent in the Army and 22.4 percent in the Air Force).

More information is available on the [Women in the ADF](#) page.



## SWING SEATS: WENTWORTH & THE RISE OF INDEPENDENCE (Excerpts from Crikey)

Danielle Wood, program director of budget policy and institutional reform at the Grattan Institute has written of [the crisis of trust in politics](#) and the protest politics that will inevitably follow. Wood says there are certain characteristics that make a seat more vulnerable to attack from an independent or minor party. "Regional seats are particularly vulnerable to a protest vote. In the 2016 election of the nine seats where an independent or minor party candidate received in excess of 20% of the primary vote, seven were in regional areas, two were in metropolitan areas — Denison and Sturt" she told Crikey. "Or if we look at seats with a total minor party/independent primary vote in excess



of 30%, 12 were in regional areas compared to two — Denison, Port Adelaide — in metropolitan areas."

"What makes a seat most vulnerable is a local candidate with some brand recognition putting up their hand," Wood said. "The vote for minor parties and independents is predominantly a protest vote — a vote for 'anyone but them'," she said. "High profile local candidates provide a lightning rod for this dissatisfaction. So can minor parties with a big name leaders. "Successful independents and minor parties differ in terms of policy and style but what they almost always have in common is a promise to 'drain the billabong' and make governments more accountable."

As such Labor can relax, but, as Macnamara illustrates, maybe not for long.

"I expect whoever is in government is particularly vulnerable to this type of vote but I don't think Labor will be entirely be off the hook," Wood said. **SEATS TO WATCH:** Higgins, Macnamara ,Reid, Brisbane & Ryan

## UGG

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has hit apparel company Ozwear with a \$25,000 fine for claiming on its website it was "100% Aussie owned" and that its "Classic Ugg" range was manufactured with "the best materials available in Australia".

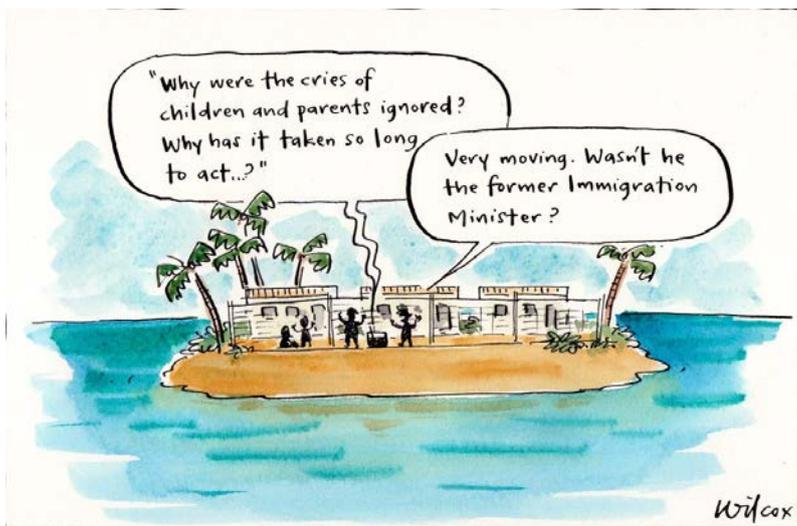
The Chinese-made items had attached to them a cardboard swing-tag in the shape of Australia, in green and gold, claiming "this exclusive premium label is uniquely Australian-owned brand for authentic Australian Ugg boots". While the products did say on them that they were made in China, that was not good enough for the consumer watchdog.

"Ozwear's conduct is unacceptable," ACCC Deputy Chair Mick Keogh said. "Under the Australian Consumer Law, businesses are prohibited from making claims that create a false impression about products being made in Australia



## IMMIGRATION

### MORRISON MUST RESETTLE CHILDREN FROM NAURU TO NEW ZEALAND – Neumann



Labor has written to the Government offering to negotiate on legislation that would enable asylum seekers to be resettled in New Zealand – including children.

Last week before the Wentworth by-election, Scott Morrison indicated he would only accept New Zealand's offer to resettle sick and vulnerable children and their families from Nauru if the Government's "lifetime ban" legislation was passed. Now he needs to stick to his word.

This is all about the children. Labor is putting children first by proposing new laws so children on Nauru can get the medical attention they need, and offering to work with the Government to secure a resettlement arrangement with New Zealand.

That's why we've written to Immigration Minister David Coleman to put the health of vulnerable children ahead of anything else.

Labor is willing to consider supporting the Government's "lifetime ban" legislation – formally known as the *Migration Legislation (Regional Processing Cohort) Bill 2016* – if the

following conditions and amendments are agreed to:

- Scott Morrison guarantees accepting New Zealand's offer and the removal of all children and their families from Nauru to New Zealand;
- Ensure any lifetime ban only applies to the refugee cohort transferred to New Zealand; and
- Limit the legislation's application to the *Special Category Visa (subclass 444)* which enables open travel of New Zealand citizens into Australia.

Scott Morrison cannot argue against these amendments as they close the "back door" from New Zealand to Australia – something he himself has called for.

"You ask a question about New Zealand... you asked me what would need to happen. We've introduced legislation into this place to prevent that backdoor movement of people from New Zealand into Australia." **Scott Morrison Question Time, 15 October 2018**

With these amendments, no refugee from Nauru or Manus Island resettled in New Zealand would be able to resettle in Australia – ensuring people smugglers are not able to exploit vulnerable people.

*"The particular efficacy of the legislation should be passed is that it closes the so call '444 back-door' from New Zealand."* Home Affairs Secretary

**Michael Pezzullo, Senate Estimates, 23 October 2018**

Labor has long called on the Liberals to accept New Zealand's generous offer to resettle refugees and negotiate conditions similar to the US refugee resettlement agreement to prevent people smugglers exploiting vulnerable people.

The Government's "**lifetime ban**" legislation in its current form is a ridiculous overreach and is irrelevant to securing third country resettlement arrangements.

This legislation has been sitting in the Senate for nearly two years without debate, the United States refugee resettlement deal is already underway and operating successfully without these laws and over 400 refugees have resettled in the US without this legislation in place.

In 2011, when Scott Morrison was the Shadow Immigration Minister he actively blocked the Malaysia Solution – a decision even former Prime Minister Tony Abbott has admitted was a mistake.

But Labor is not going to be like Scott Morrison and Tony Abbott and play politics with the lives of vulnerable and sick children – we want to see this situation resolved.

Nauru and Manus Island were set up as temporary regional processing centres but have become places of indefinite detention because of the failure of successive Liberal Governments to negotiate other third country resettlement options.

Morrison has failed to end genuine refugees languishing in indefinite detention and Labor has come forward so that sick and vulnerable children on Nauru can be resettled in New Zealand as quickly as possible.

Morrison has talked a big game – but now it's time he comes to the table and accepts the New Zealand offer.

## ENVIRONMENT

### EVERYONE WANTS ACTION ON CLIMATE – Mark Butler

On Thursday morning the nation's leading health professionals, company directors, business and welfare groups, and members of the Liberal Party have all spoken out against the Morrison Government's complete lack of climate action.

[Health professionals](#), including Fiona Stanley and Peter Doherty, have published an open letter today in leading health journal Lancet, saying the Australian Government's contemptuous dismissal of the latest IPCC report on climate change "**unacceptable**" and "**we are dismayed by the implications of our government's ongoing stance to disregard the consensus of the world's leading climate scientists.**"

[Australian company directors](#), for the first time, have nominated climate change as the number one issue they want the Morrison Government to address, saying they need to "**seriously consider what they're doing**" against the real and urgent risk that climate change presents to organisations and businesses. "**Directors get it about climate change. It's real. The scientists are unequivocal in their advice. And we're conscious of the need for action.**"

A [coalition of business and welfare groups](#), including the Business Council of Australia, AiGroup, ACOSS, St Vincent de Paul and the Energy Users Association have issued a statement saying "**investors will only view policy as durable if it effectively addresses all parts of the (energy) trilemma, including meeting emission reduction commitments.**" And "**we call on all sides of politics to deliver stable policy and investment certainty by addressing all parts of the energy trilemma – cost, reliability and emissions reduction.**"

While [Liberal Senator Dean Smith](#), added his name to the list of a growing number of Liberal moderates who are ringing the alarm that the Liberals "**risk losing the support of the next generation by failing to address climate change.**"

### LABOR WILL AMEND THE LAW TO PROTECT ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE – Burke

Labor this week announced a new policy which if implemented would have given the Environment Minister the power to stop our World Heritage-listed Sydney Opera House from being treated as nothing more than a billboard.

If elected a Shorten Labor Government will ensure the Environment Minister has the power to regulate to protect our environment and heritage sites.

At the moment, plans officially registered under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act can't be enforced. We recently saw the Opera House used as a billboard.

The management plan for the Opera House specifically says that this building is not meant to be used as a billboard "**The Sydney Opera House exterior, particularly the shells (and even the Tarpeian Wall face), should not be regarded as a giant billboard or commercial / advertising opportunity**" (page 185, Respecting the Vision: Sydney Opera House – a Conservation Management Plan).

Yet rather than follow the plan, the Prime Minister endorsed the reduction of the Opera House's iconic sails to being "**the biggest billboard Sydney has**".

Labor will ensure that the words that are in the plans made under the EPBC Act aren't just nice ideas. The EPBC Act includes management plans, recovery plans and threat abatement plans. These plans need to be taken seriously and Labor will change the law so the Minister can regulate where plans exist.

## ENERGY POLICY

### LIBERAL LIES ON ENERGY PRICES – Mark Butler

Scott Morrison's claim of savings of up to \$832 from implementation of the ACCC recommendation for a regulated default offer is nothing short of a lie to Australians who have suffered from rising power bills under the chaotic and divided Government.

Scott Morrison's lie grossly misrepresents ACCC analysis of the price saving this recommendation will deliver.

The real ACCC calculated savings are presented in the table below from page 368 of the report.

Scott Morrison's \$832 lie corresponds to the difference between average existing standing offers and the lowest price market offer by SAPN, one provider in South Australia.

But the Liberals are used to lying to Australian households and businesses when it comes to their power bills.

In 2013 Tony Abbott promised a saving of \$550 on power bills if they elected a Liberal Government, and people are still waiting for that.

In 2018 Malcolm Turnbull, Scott Morrison and Josh Frydenberg promised again a \$550 power saving if the National Energy Guarantee was adopted. But that policy went up in smoke when the Liberal party room decided to ditch the Prime Minister.

The only announcement on prices made yesterday was a position that Bill Shorten and Malcolm Turnbull agreed ten weeks ago, to adopt a default price offer in the electricity market, which the ACCC has said would deliver a saving of somewhere between \$105 and \$165 dollars per year for about 10-20 per cent of Australians.

No one in Australia believes Scott Morrison and the out-of-touch Liberals will lower power prices.

The Liberals have been promising to lower power prices for five years – and power prices have gone up and up and up. And it's Australian households and businesses that will continue to pay.

	Vic	NSW	SA	SE Qld
Diff between standing and market offers (AEMC)	330	210	280	212
Saving for each customer moved onto default	165	105	140	106
Standing offer customers	172 000	644 609	92 887	299 477
Total saved	28 380 000	67 683 945	13 004 180	31 744 562
<b>Average per customer (whole market)</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>24</b>

- For market offer customers, our recommendations are targeted at improving competition, improving transparency and making it easier for customers to find a better deal.
- We have assumed it is achievable to get 20 per cent of customers on market offers with discounts between zero and 10 per cent to move to market offers with discounts of at least 30 per cent. This may be conservative given the range of measures we are recommending.
- Using data collected during the Inquiry (shown in figures 1.8, 1.11, 1.14 and 1.17) we have calculated the impact of this switching on retailer revenue (holding prices constant across the market).
- The change in revenue divided by the number of customers gives an estimate of annual average savings.

### MORRISON REANNOUNCES LABOR POLICY, AGAIN. – Mark Butler

In a desperate attempt to distract from their chaos and dysfunction, the Morrison Government is re-hashing Labor policy, again.

[Labor announced](#) on the 19<sup>th</sup> of August that a [Shorten Labor Government](#) will help households and businesses get a better deal on their power prices – overhauling electricity offers available to consumers and scrapping outdated deals so Australians pay less for their power and can more easily compare offers.

Malcolm Turnbull and Josh Frydenberg followed Labor's lead, backing in the policy on the 20<sup>th</sup> of August.

For over two months now this has been a bipartisan position but today's bizarre re-announcement by the Government shows just how policy bereft this hopeless Morrison Government is.

For five years, the Liberals have done nothing but make their energy crisis worse by playing ideological anti-renewable politics with energy. Their policy paralysis, dictated by the hard-right, have led to power prices skyrocketing for Australian households and businesses. At the same time, the government's own data shows carbon pollution rising all the way to 2030, and investors are crying out for national energy policy to support investment in renewables post 2020.

As Deloitte Access Economics Director Chris Richardson said in this morning's papers *"the current government's inability to craft a compromise within its own ranks — leaves Australia locked into an investment landscape that looks more Third World than First World."*

Only Labor will deliver energy policy certainty that will start to bring down power prices, and pollution.

### RET RESPONSIBLE FOR LOWER POWER BILLS - Mark Butler

On Monday night in Senate Estimates the Energy Department refuted the bizarre claim by Resources Minister, Matt Canavan that *"the Renewable Energy Target (RET)... has proved to be one of the worst policies adopted in this country, maybe the world."*

Under questioning from Senator Keneally, Energy Deputy Secretary Rob Heferen confirmed the RET has fuelled renewables investment and driven down wholesale power prices.

When asked by Senator Keneally if wholesale power prices will be cheaper over coming years because of investment in renewables driven by the RET, Mr Heferen said, *"Oh clearly, yes."*

Then Senator Keneally asked if *"it would be fair to say the RET has exceeded in meeting the targets for which it was designed, and it is contributing to lower wholesale power price?"*

*"Yes"* was Mr Heferen's response.

Confirming the energy policy chaos we've all become accustomed to under the Liberals, Liberal Senator Ruston stated; *"Obviously various Ministers have made comments in relation to this policy... Minister Canavan is entitled to his own opinion."*

Any notion of a single coherent government policy has been thrown out the window as the Government continues to buckle to the demands of its extreme anti-renewables right wing.

The Liberals won't even refute Minister Canavan's unhinged attack on his own Government's support for Labor's RET, which is also the only policy which is bringing down power prices for Australian households and businesses.

Renewables and storage will continue to be the cheapest form of new energy investment; it will deliver cheaper power for Australians and bring down pollution.

The choice for Australians is clear – Labor is for a renewable energy future, and cheaper power bills. The unstable Coalition is for more expensive coal and higher power bills.

### ENERGY EQUANIMITY

*Ahead of the Council of Australian Governments Energy Council meeting this week, representatives of Australia's small and large businesses; conservation groups; energy network, supply and services sectors; investors; property sector; and social services sector have together agreed that driving down electricity costs is urgent, and that addressing emissions and reliability are not only critical in their own right but are essential parts of achieving cost reduction.*





*Electricity costs are a key part of the “energy trilemma”, together with reliability and emissions reductions. Reducing electricity costs requires investment in electricity supply and unlocking this investment requires credible and stable policy. Investors will only view policy as durable if it effectively addresses all parts of the trilemma, including meeting emissions reduction commitments.*

*We support Australia’s full participation in the Paris Agreement and deployment of effective, efficient and equitable plans in energy and the rest of the economy to deliver on Australia’s Paris commitments. Continuing bipartisan commitment to Paris sends a clear long-term signal to investors and contributes to the global solution needed to minimise climate change.*

*A major global transition towards lower emissions and ultimately net zero emissions is both necessary and inevitable, and in Australia’s electricity sector a low emissions transition is already underway.*

*We believe this transition will benefit Australians overall. But we note that it could also have uneven impacts on some groups such as low income households; displaced workers and their communities; and emissions-intensive trade-exposed industries (EITE) and their employees. These groups will likely require specific measures as we address the energy trilemma.*

*Durable agreement on sound policy frameworks and the direction of change can deliver a smoother, fairer and even more prosperous transition. We call on all sides of politics to deliver stable policy and investment certainty by addressing all parts of the energy trilemma—cost, reliability and emissions reduction*

### **TIME FOR MORRISON TO BRING BACK NATIONAL ENERGY GUARANTEE – Mark Butler**

Over the weekend the voters of the historically Liberal seat of Wentworth sent the Morrison Government a clear and undeniable message - they have had enough of Tony Abbott and the hard-right of the Coalition dictating climate and energy policy.

The Prime Minister needs to listen to the Australian people, Labor, business and experts and reverse his Government’s decision to drop the National Energy Guarantee.

Returning to the table to negotiate with Labor a bipartisan energy policy that will support the growth of renewable energy, bring down carbon pollution and bring down electricity prices for Australian households and businesses is in the national interest.

Several Liberal MPs have also made this point, with Trent Zimmerman saying “we are going to have to go to the next election with a clear plan to meet our Paris Targets”.

Yet the Prime Minister and his Treasurer insist there is nothing to see here, and their ignoring of climate change will continue.

Rather than new Energy Minister Angus Taylor’s proclamations that he would not “*even try*” to deliver energy policy certainty, it is now clearer than ever that the Prime Minister needs to act on his words from the 15<sup>th</sup> of August when he said “*Australians want all three, and that’s what the National Energy Guarantee delivers.*”



### **MORRISON’S OFFICIALS CONFIRM EMBASSY PLAN WAS WENTWORTH DRIVEN – Wong**

Officials from Scott Morrison’s own Department have today confirmed they were advised of his decision to junk longstanding bipartisan policy and consider moving Australia’s policy on the location of our embassy in Israel, and to reconsider the Iran nuclear deal, just a day before the October 16 announcement.

The revelations have come tonight in evidence before Senate Estimates from some of the most senior officials in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

**SENATOR PENNY WONG:** “Ms Millar, when were you first aware of the Government’s decision to canvas the possibility of relocating Australia’s embassy in Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.”

**CAROLINE MILLAR** (Deputy Secretary, National Security and International Policy): “Senator, we were advised on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October”.

**WONG:** “By whom?”

**MILLAR:** “By the Prime Minister’s Office”

**WONG:** “Were you also advised at that time of the decision on the JCPOA?”

**JUSTIN HAYHURST:** (First Assistant Secretary, International Division). “That’s right.”

**WONG:** “This was by phone Mr Hayhurst?”

**HAYHURST:** “That’s right.”

**WONG:** “About what time?”

**HAYHURST:** “In the morning of the 15<sup>th</sup>.”

The evidence confirms Tuesday’s announcements were rushed, made with no consultation and no thought to the consequences for Australia’s standing in the region, or national security.

As we now know the announcement, made just five days before the Wentworth by-election, prompted a furious response from Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi to her Australian counterpart, and prompted the unprecedented leak of ASIO advice relating to the Government’s proposal.

Foreign policy, and Australia’s national interest are far too important to be played with for domestic political purposes.

The Australian people deserve a leader who puts the national interest ahead of self-interest, and governs in the best long-term interest of the nation, not one prepared to play games with long-standing foreign policy positions in a desperate bid to cling to power

## JAMAL KHASHOGGI – Wong



Labor joins with the G7 Foreign Ministers, of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and the High Representative of the European Union in condemning the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi in the strongest possible terms and calls on Saudi Arabia to now provide a full and proper account of the events leading up to his killing. Labor is deeply disturbed by the evidence, including that presented by Turkey overnight, that Mr Khashoggi was killed as a result of a deliberate, planned and horrific attack by Saudi officials. The Saudi Government's explanations are simply not credible and the world now demands Saudi Arabia tell the truth about the events of 2 October in its Istanbul consulate and bring to account those responsible for the killing of Mr Khashoggi. Freedom of expression and a free press are important values Australia shares with all nations committed to democracy and the rule of law. That is why Labor last week called for Australia to boycott the Riyadh "Future Investment Initiative" (FII) conference. We

welcome the Government's decision to support that call and join with our friends and allies in withdrawing official Australian representation at the conference.

It is appropriate that as a country we send a strong signal of our concern over Jamal Khashoggi's murder and our expectation that the Government of Saudi Arabia provides a forthright and accurate account of what has occurred..

## ON THE SITUATION IN CAMBODIA – Hill

Tuesday marked the 27th Anniversary of the signing of the Paris Peace Accords which bought peace to Cambodia. Australia's leading role in securing that landmark agreement is one of the proudest legacies of Hon. Gareth Evans QC's tenure as Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Unfortunately, the promise of the peace accords and the hope of a true democracy in Cambodia, respecting the rule of law and human rights, has not been fulfilled.

Last Monday the House of Representatives debated an important motion on Cambodia.

Six Labor MPs spoke powerfully about the growing concerns about the deteriorating situation in Cambodia including the recent sham election, and the worries we are hearing in the Australian community that Hun Sen's Cambodian People's Party's tentacles now reach our cities and suburbs.

Yet not one Government Member had the courage to turn up and speak.

It is shameful that no Government MPs are prepared to defend the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison government's dealings with the Cambodian Government and lack of action.

The Labor MPs who spoke are Julian Hill, Anne Stanley, Chris Hayes, Jim Chalmers, Chris Bowen and Clare O'Neil.

[Our speeches and the motion that Government MPs failed to debate can be found here.](#)

## TARGETED FINANCIAL SANCTIONS AGAINST MYANMAR MILITARY OFFICERS – Wong

Labor welcomes the Government's decision to impose targeted financial sanctions and travel bans against five Myanmar military officers responsible for human rights violations committed by units under their command in Rakhine state.

Labor last month endorsed the Foreign Minister's decision to flag targeted sanctions following the release of the [full report of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar](#) which found the Myanmar military was directly responsible for "gross human rights violations and serious violations of international humanitarian law".

That report concluded there was sufficient evidence to warrant an investigation and prosecutions for genocide perpetrated against the Rohingya.

Australia's actions today again make clear the bipartisan position of the Government and Opposition that the Myanmar Government can no longer ignore its responsibilities and must act to rein in the Tatmadaw and hold to account those responsible for these horrific crimes.

Australia's humanitarian contribution to those affected by this crisis has strong bipartisan support.

We encourage the Government to continue to work with Myanmar and our partners in the region towards a durable solution to the crisis.

## RIGHTS

## REDRESS IMPLEMENTATION MUST BE DONE RIGHT – Burney

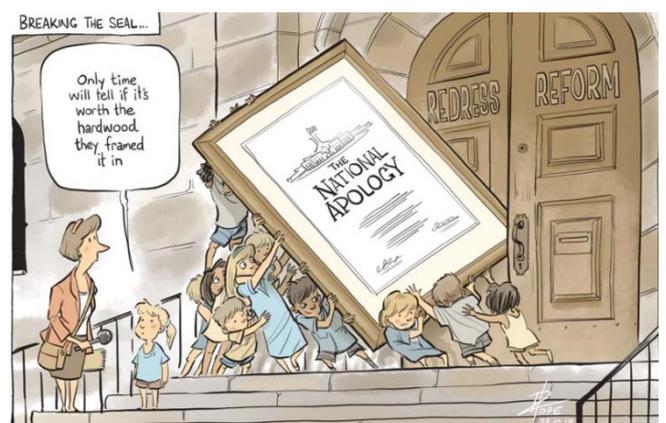
It was revealed at Senate Estimates yesterday that staff responsible for handling National Redress Scheme applications have raised serious concerns about the adequacy of trauma-informed processes.

Several former contract staff have formally brought their concerns to the attention of the Secretary of the Department of Social Services.

"The people who wrote to me were concerned that the staff who were taking part in this processes didn't have the appropriate skills to deal with individuals who had been traumatised". [Secretary, Department of Social Services, 25 October 2018]

The Department of Social Services has given assurances that an investigation has taken place and processes improved – but this is a critical reminder of the importance of getting the implementation of the National Redress Scheme right.

The Department of Social Services also confirmed that only nine institutions are formally participating in the scheme, with under 10 payments made to survivors.



These participating institutions are: YMCA, the Korowal School, Scouts Australia, Scouts New South Wales, Scouts Victoria, Scouts South Australia, Scouts Western Australia, United Protestants Association NSW and the Salvation Army Australia.

*"These institutions should be commended on their prompt participation," Linda Burney said.*

*"It is important that other institutions make every effort to join the Scheme as quickly as possible so that survivors can begin to access redress and support.*

*"Given the highly personal and serious nature of the matters handled by the National Redress Scheme, government must ensure staff and processes are beyond reproach.*

*"Dedicated and skilled people are required – this isn't simply another program that the Government can outsource.*

*"Survivors should not have to share their stories with multiple individuals on multiple occasions.*

*"The National Apology marks not the end, but the beginning of the process for delivering restitution and support for victims and survivors of institutional child sexual abuse.*

*"Survivors have been through so much and have waited so long. It is absolutely imperative that we get the rollout of National Redress Scheme right."*

## GOVERNANCE

### ASIC TO LOOK INTO STUART ROBERT – Leigh

**Labor welcomes confirmation by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission that it will make a new series of inquiries into Stuart Robert's directorships.**

The inquiry follows [media reports](#) that Mr Robert's resignation as a director of Cryo Australia only occurred after media inquiries, rather than testimony he gave parliament, and examine whether he was in breach of the Corporations Act.

The public deserve to know that everything has been done to ensure that he has done no wrong, particularly since the allegations surrounding his involvement as a director of companies would fall under his responsibilities as the Government Minister in charge of monitoring companies and their directors.

It was also concerning to learn overnight that the system cited as the single most effective measure to crack down on illegal phoenix activity – the Director Identification Number – may not be implemented for years.

Labor has been calling for action on this for 16 months yet overnight Treasury could not provide a timeframe for implementing the system, and conceded that it could take *"a couple of years"*.

We are concerned that the Government and Treasury have "not formed a view yet" on what minimum identity verification is required, if at all. For the sake of Australia's taxpayers, workers and honest businesses, Mr Robert and his government colleagues must implement a director identification number sooner rather than later.

### INVESTIGATION INTO STUART ROBERT'S INTERNET BILL A SHAM - Farrell/Watt

**Scott Morrison's so-called investigation into Stuart Robert's extraordinary internet data charges has been revealed as a complete farce.**

Officials confirmed last night in Senate Estimates that the Department of Finance took no part in the investigation, other than to provide *"some information"*.

Senator Murray Watt queried whether Mr Robert's exorbitant home internet usage had been sufficiently explained.

*"What has the Department done to satisfy itself that these exorbitant charges were not the result of commercial interests,"* he asked.

The Finance and Public Administration Committee heard that the Department of Finance:

- **Was not involved in any discussions with Minister Robert regarding his bills;**
- **Did not request he provide any documentation with respect to the internet use that resulted in massive bills that were to the taxpayer;**
- **Was unable to provide any evidence that Minister Robert did not profit by using his taxpayer funded dedicated data line for private business purposes.**

Officials also gave evidence that the Special Minister of State Alex Hawke, who was tasked by Scott Morrison with investigating Mr Robert, was on leave for a period during the investigation.

True to form, Scott Morrison clearly never took this issue seriously.

Rather than insisting on an independent investigation, Scott Morrison kept one of his closest leadership coup allies safe by having him investigated by another.

Minister Hawke must now explain exactly what he has done to ensure that taxpayers' funds were not used inappropriately by Mr Robert. The Special Minister of State must:

- **Detail what evidence he has received to prove Mr Robert's massive data charges were appropriate and not rung up through internet use related to his many business dealings;**
- **Provide details of Mr Robert's internet bill over the period relating to the expenses he has since repaid;**
- **Clarify whether or not the Department of Finance raised the issue of high bills with Mr Robert and/or asked him to do something about it before the issue became public;**
- **Explain how his investigation was able to conclude that Minister Robert received no personal benefit from this tax payer funded scandal.**

## PUBLIC SERVICE

### GOVERNMENT AGENCY SLAMS LIBERALS' PUBLIC SERVICE STAFFING CAP – Chalmers

**New evidence reveals the Liberals' arbitrary Average Staffing Level (ASL) cap is forcing at least one Government agency to spend 25 per cent more on contractors at the expense of full-time positions. The Liberals' arbitrary ASL cap has become counterproductive, leading to a hollowing out of the public service and sparking a blowout in spending on contractors and consultants.**

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) has told the APS Review in a recent submission it was funded for an extra 54 staff, but the need to use more expensive contractors due to the ASL cap meant it had to cut 14 of those positions. CEO Craig Ritchie said:

"The ASL cap is blind to funding levels and operational requirements, forcing the Institute to rely on external contractors to deliver on core functions." ([AIATSIS submission](#) to the Independent Review of the APS)

Mr Ritchie said relying needlessly on contractors: "Creates a number of systematic inefficiencies" and caused a "high turnover and inability to attract and retain skilled staff and create career trajectories, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff".

The agency's submission further strengthens the need for Labor's policy to abolish the ASL cap to allow agencies to set their staffing levels based on operational requirements, but within an overall budget.

It comes after the Department of Home Affairs [recently called for](#) more flexibility around staffing levels to help improve service delivery.

Abolishing the cap will help ensure expertise, experience and corporate memory is retained in the public service by encouraging agencies to employ permanent bureaucrats over contractors and consultants.

## COALITION SLASHES HUMAN SERVICES JOBS – Husic

**The Coalition Government continues to gut the public service with the Department of Human Services (DHS) suffering the deepest jobs cuts. This year alone DHS lost 1168 staff from crucial services such as Centrelink and Medicare.**

At the same time processing times for services continue to be a significant issue with many people spending hours in queues, on hold, or forced to use impractical Government websites.

The Coalition Government tried to hide their cuts with temporary, outsourced jobs with private providers, but Human Services should be about delivering quality services to vulnerable Australians, not delivering profits for multinationals.

Spending tax payer dollars so inefficiently smacks of the Liberals' obsession with privatising Centrelink and Medicare

A Shorten Labor Government will invest \$196 million in 1200 new permanent and full-time Department of Human Services staff around the country, improving waiting times and services Australians rely on.

Centrelink programs and income support are complex, which is why it's so important to have permanent staff who are properly trained and skilled.

The additional jobs Labor has announced will re-build the services affected by the Liberals' harsh cuts, which have hurt Australians who rely on critical services.

## MEDIA

## LIBERAL FINGERPRINTS ON ABC CHAIR RECRUITMENT PROCESS – Rowland

**Labor questioning at Senate Estimates this week revealed that the Morrison Government has appointed a Liberal-aligned recruitment firm to assist in selecting the next ABC Chair.**



The Government ran a non-transparent, closed "select" tender process to select Korn Ferry, a US-based company with Liberal Party links.

The Head of Board Services Sydney at Korn Ferry, [Robert Webster](#), was formerly a Minister in the NSW Liberal Greiner Government.

Mr Webster has also made significant donations to the Liberal Party, totalling more than \$29,000 in the past 3 years, with [\\$14,400 donated in 2016](#) and [\\$15,375 donated in 2017](#).

Department officials justified the closed tender citing the urgent need to fill the position, which begs the question: why is this crucial selection process being rushed to suit a Morrison Government timeline?

This hasty process is yet another sign of the continued Liberal Government interference with the ABC, as Scott Morrison lurches from crisis to crisis.

Wherever you look, Liberal Government interference with the ABC is at play.

The ABC needs a Chair who will provide the leadership needed to uphold the independence and integrity of the ABC.

It is crucial the ABC board appointments be, and be seen to be, independent. This Government just doesn't get it.

Australians cannot have confidence in Minister Fifield when it comes to the ABC's independence. He cannot be trusted and must stand down.

## CONTENT REVIEW LOST IN THE FIFIELD TRIANGLE – Rowland

**At Senate Estimates this week, the Minister for Communications and the Arts continued to delay the release of the report of the Australian and Children's Screen Content Review.**

Minister Mitch Fifield has been sitting on the report since December last year, and the delay is causing uncertainty and frustration across the screen sector.

Yet another victim of the Fifield Triangle, the Content Review was first announced in May 2017 as a joint review by the Department of Communications and the Arts, the ACMA and Screen Australia. Following a public consultation process undertaken over a year ago, in September 2017, the report was dutifully delivered to the Minister.

On Tuesday Labor Senator Anne Urquhart formally requested the Minister table the report, however the Minister elected to take the request on notice.

Senator Urquhart then asked the Minister how he would respond to an Order for the Production of Documents in the next sitting period, but the Minister elected to hold that did not want to give anything away, noting that Senators are always at liberty to put such motions before the Senate.

Not satisfied with this response, Senator Urquhart then moved that the Committee formally request that the Minister immediately table the report of the Australian and Children's Screen Content Review.

The Committee suspended briefly for a private meeting to consider the motion, however the Government used its casting vote to the defeat the motion and block the release of the report.

Australian stories need to be told and heard by Australians and across the world, and we need to ensure we have the right measures in place in the contemporary environment.

The Minister should immediately release the report so that stakeholders across the sector have a shared evidence-base upon which to craft a way forward.

## QLD INFRASTRUCTURE

### MORRISON MUST RELEASE FUNDING FOR MACKAY RING ROAD – Albanese

Scott Morrison should immediately release the funding he has secretly allocated for the Mackay Ring Road and get on with delivering this important project.

According to media leaks, the Federal Government allocated funding to 10 infrastructure projects including the Mackay Ring Road Stage II six months ago in its 2018 Budget. But it cynically chose to sit on the funding, delaying its announcement until the next Federal election campaign. In Question Time on Wednesday Shadow Infrastructure Minister Anthony Albanese asked Infrastructure Minister Michael McCormack:



*“Why at a time when the road toll is rising and congestion in our cities is worsening, is the Government sitting on these projects and not getting on with the job of delivering them?”*

But Mr McCormack refused to address the question.

Mr Albanese said the Government should end its political games and release the investment now so it can be put to use in the public interest.

*“Scott Morrison should stop pussy footing around,”* Mr Albanese said.

*“Commencing this project now would create much-needed economic activity and construction jobs in the short term and generate productivity gains once the project is completed.*

*“The Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government has spent five years*

*cutting infrastructure investment and is now engaged in delaying projects until it suits their partisan political convenience.*

*“Either that or the investment is not real and the projects would be pushed off into the Never-Never by a re-elected Morrison Government.”*

Labor candidate for Dawson Belinda Hassan said Federal Labor had already committed \$102 million to build the Ring Road in partnership with the Queensland Government.

*“If both major parties agree the Ring Road Stage II should go ahead, there is no reason why we shouldn’t get to work as soon as possible,”* Ms Hassan said. *“This project will make a real difference to our community and we demand action now.”*

### MORRISON MUST RELEASE FUNDING FOR ROCKHAMPTON RING ROAD – Albanese

Scott Morrison should immediately release the funding he has secretly allocated for the Rockhampton Ring Road and get on with this important project.

According to media leaks, the Federal Government allocated investment for 10 major infrastructure projects, including the Rockhampton Ring Road, six months ago in the 2018 Budget.

But it cynically chose to delay announcing the work until the next Federal election campaign.

In Question Time Shadow Infrastructure Minister Anthony Albanese asked Infrastructure Minister Michael McCormack: *“Why at a time when the road toll is rising and congestion in our cities is worsening, is the Government sitting on these projects and not getting on with the job of delivering them?”*

But Mr McCormack failed to address the question.

Mr Albanese said Prime Minister Scott Morrison should end the political games and release the money now so it can be put to use in the public interest.

*“Scott Morrison should stop pussy footing around,”* Mr Albanese said.

*“Commencing this project now would create much-needed economic activity and construction jobs in the short term and important productivity gains once the project is completed.*

*“The Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government has spent five years cutting infrastructure investment and now wants more delays to suit its political convenience.*

*“Either that or the investment is not real and the projects would be pushed off into the Never-Never by a re-elected Morrison Government.”*

Labor candidate for Capricornia Russell Robertson said Federal Labor had already committed investment for the Ring Road, which was recommended in the Fitzroy River Floodplain and Road Planning study, commissioned by the former Labor Government in June, 2009, and completed in December, 2011.

*“If there is bipartisan support we should just get on with the job,”* Mr Robertson said.

*“The Ring Road project would make a real difference in my community by eliminating traffic congestion and improving road safety.*

*“We have already waited too long, but Morrison Government is creating more unnecessary delays.”*

The Rockhampton Ring Road will run from the Yeppoon Roundabout, along the western side of the airport to a third bridge crossing before reconnecting with the existing Bruce Highway at Parkhurst.



### MORRISON MUST RELEASE FUNDING FOR LINKFIELD ROAD OVERPASS – Albanese

Scott Morrison should immediately release the funding he has secretly allocated for the Linkfield Road Overpass and get on with this important project.

According to media leaks, the Federal Government allocated investment for 10 major infrastructure projects including the Linkfield Road Overpass six months ago, in the 2018 Budget.

But it cynically chose to sit on the funding for announcement during the next Federal election campaign.

In Question Time on Wednesday Shadow Infrastructure Minister Anthony Albanese asked Infrastructure Minister Michael McCormack: *“Why at a time when the road toll is rising and congestion in our cities is worsening, is the Government sitting on these projects and not getting on with the job of delivering them?”*

But Mr McCormack failed to address the question.



Mr Albanese said Prime Minister Scott Morrison should end the political games and release the money now so it can be put to use in the public interest.

*“Scott Morrison should stop pussy footing around,” Mr Albanese said.*

*“Commencing this project now would create much-needed economic activity and construction jobs in the short term and important productivity gains once the project is completed.*

*“The Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government has spent five years cutting infrastructure investment and now wants more delays to suit its political convenience.*

*“Either that or the investment is not real and the projects would be pushed off into*

*the Never-Never by a re-elected Morrison Government.”*

Labor candidate for Dickson Ali France said Federal Labor committed \$60 million for the Linkfield Road Overpass in August.

*“If both the Coalition and Labor all agree the overpass is necessary, we should stop looking for unnecessary delays and obstacles and get on with the job in the public interest,” Ms France said.*

*“This overpass will make a real difference to my community in terms of road safety and convenience.*

*“We’ve waited long enough.”*



## LABOR'S FUTUREASIA: FOCUS ON ASIAN LANGUAGES – Plibersek/Wong/Bowen

A Shorten Labor Government will get more Australians studying Asian languages to ensure the next generation is prepared for the jobs and economic opportunities of the Asian century.

Asia is home to the fastest growing middle class on earth, and Australia is right on its doorstep.

Almost nine in 10 of the next billion middle class consumers will be Asian. For Australian business to realise the most economic benefit, we must urgently improve on Asian languages and literacy.

In recent years, the proportion of school students choosing to study Asian languages in Year 12 has stagnated, and in some cases gone backwards.

We must do better.

Labor will make Asian languages and literacy a national priority.

We will invest \$32 million to strengthen Asian language and literacy education in schools. Our plan is:

### 1. To boost the supply of Asian language teachers

Up to 100 scholarships a year for Australians who are Asian language native speakers and for top performers in priority Asian languages in Year 12, to go on to study a teaching qualification.

### 2. Establish a new nationwide FutureAsia – Asia Capable Schools program

Intensive training for 5,000 principals and senior teachers to drive sustained whole-of-school change by supporting them to make the necessary updates to their curriculum and teacher capability. The training will cover the skills students will need for the Australian jobs created in the Asian Century, as well as Asian languages, histories, geographies, arts, literature, and how these translate to the school curriculum.

Labor would also seek matching funding from the states so this program can be rolled out for all 10,000 Australian principals over a five year period.

### 3. Improve Asian languages curriculum materials from pre-school to Year 12

This would build on the existing Early Language Literacy App and Language Learning Space. Hindi will be added as the first priority - Indonesian, Mandarin, and Japanese are already covered.

### 4. Set ambitious targets and goals for Asian languages

Working with the state and territories through COAG, and with non-government schools too.

### 5. Collect better data about the take up of Asian languages in Australia

So we can more easily track the progress and take up of Asian languages.

Since 2011, no detailed Australia wide data on Asian language study in schools has been collected.

### 6. Establish an Advisory Council on Asia Capabilities

Headed up by experts from academia, the education sector, business, and not-for-profits, to drive research and generate new ideas to boost teaching and learning about Asia across all levels of Australia's education system.

### 7. Undertake a whole-of-government audit of Australian and state government policies and programs on Asian literacy and languages education

To stop costly duplication and to ensure government money is well targeted at achieving improved Asia capability.

### 8. Convene regular meetings of Indo-Pacific Education Ministers

To further strengthen educational links between Australia and our Asian neighbours. The meetings will discuss collaborative education initiatives, scholarships, and strengthening ties across school and post-secondary education systems.

One year ago, Labor announced a comprehensive policy approach to a deeper Asian engagement called 'FutureAsia'.

A Shorten Labor Government is determined to do more than pay lip-service to the Asian century. At a time when Scott Morrison is using foreign policy as a political tool, Labor is doing the work to put in place the foundations for a more prosperous relationship with our region.

Labor has continued to develop a fundamental whole-of-government, nationwide strategy to deepen and broaden our engagement with Asia.

The following FutureAsia policies have already been announced:

- Restoration of \$1.5 million in funding cut from the Asian Education Foundation
- Allocating \$3 million to boost the Asian capability of Australian boards, working with the Australian Institute of Company Directors
- Establishing the Australian-ASEAN Studies Centre
- Establishing an Asian Diaspora program
- Seek an agreement to establish a reciprocal internship program with China
- Make Australia Week in China an annual event
- Set up a team to tackle non-tariff barriers to trade

- Hold meetings of Asia-Pacific Finance Ministers in advance of the G20 Finance Ministers meeting
- Holding an annual 2 +2 of Australian and Indonesian Finance and Trade Ministers
- Report annually to the Parliament on progress in implementing FutureAsia
- Support-in-principle the 10 priority recommendations of Peter Varghese's Indian Economic Strategy
- Hold Annual Australia Week in India trade missions
- Establish an India/Australia reciprocal internship program.

### **SENATE ESTIMATES EXPOSES LIBERALS' CUTS AND CHAOS – Plibersek/Giles/Pratt**

Senate Estimates committee hearings this week have exposed the Liberals' cuts and chaos on schools and unis. Scott Morrison is so desperate to ram through his \$14 billion of cuts to public schools, he's shut his own education minister out of school funding negotiations.

It was revealed this week that Mr Morrison has now put Treasurer Josh Frydenburg in charge of ripping money from public schools.

This is confirmation the Liberals are only interested in cutting schools, not improving them for our kids.

It's also a humiliation for Education Minister Dan Tehan, who's been side-lined just weeks into his new job.

There has been five years of school cuts and chaos under the Liberals, now they've caused a turf war to erupt between ministers.

It seems there's no end to Scott Morrison's school funding crisis even though he promised to fix it by October 4.

If states do sign school funding agreements, it will be because Mr Morrison is holding a gun to their heads.

And during sustained questioning in Senate Estimates last night, the government was forced to admit it had no idea how many Australians will miss out on uni due to Scott Morrison's cuts.

That's despite independent experts saying the Liberals' cuts will see around 200,000 people miss out on uni over the coming decade or so.

Unlike the Liberals, Labor will make big investments in schools and unis to give every Australian the opportunity to reach their full potential – no matter where they live, or how much their parents earn.

### **CLAIMS OUR VET SYSTEM IS LEADING THE WORLD DON'T STACK UP- Cameron**

Claims in Senate Estimates by Australian Skills Quality Authority chief executive Mark Patterson that Australia's vocational education system is an internationally renowned world class system fly in the face of what the experts are saying.

Australia's VET system is in crisis after more than \$3 billion of Coalition cuts, 140,000 fewer apprentices, TAFE closures throughout the country, widespread rorting of the VET FEE-HELP by for profit providers and costly failures across IT systems.

Among recent critics are no less than the OECD, the Productivity Commission, the Business Council of Australia and the ACTU.

A recent report by retired senior public servant Terry Moran showed Australia's VET system is underfunded, fragmented, devalued and has no effective governance. The report showed funding arrangements under the Coalition are chaotic and there is no national strategy.

ASQA themselves have previously said parts of the Australian training market are in *"a race to the bottom"*.

Australia is at the bottom of skill charts for our capacity to capitalise on global value chains, with the OECD reporting that we don't have the skills needed to engage effectively.

Shadow Minister for Skills, TAFE and Apprenticeships, Senator Doug Cameron, said the overly upbeat assessment by Mr Patterson mirrors that of the Coalition and is not based in reality.

*"Anyway you look at it, Australia's VET system needs urgent reform and no amount of sugar coating is going to fix it,"* Senator Cameron said.

*"TAFE enrolments have plummeted 24.5 per cent, dodgy private training providers continue to operate, thousands of students have debts for courses they have not done and \$24 million has been wasted on the now abandoned Australian Apprenticeship Management System."*

Senator Cameron says he has no confidence in the new Skills and Vocational Education Minister Michaelia Cash to address the underlying problems in the VET system.

*"Our country's future relies on our young people being properly trained for the jobs of the future and this is not happening to an appropriate standard under this hopeless Government and the demoted and disgraced Senator Cash,"* Senator Cameron said.

*"Within the first 100 days of a Shorten Labor government, we will conduct a once in a generation inquiry into the post-secondary education system."*

*"Labor will also provide \$100 million to the Building TAFE for the Future Fund, waive upfront fees for 100,000 TAFE students and ensure at least two thirds of all government funding for vocational education will go to TAFE. The balance will go to not-for-profit community and adult educators, and only high quality private providers with demonstrated links to industry."*

This is a Government that says one thing but does another.

### **LIBERALS PANDER TO IGNORANCE – Carr**

On Thursday night Senate Estimates [exposed](#) that former Education Minister, Simon Birmingham, secretly vetoed 11 humanities research projects in an attempt to pander to extreme right wing elements of the Liberal-National Coalition.

These projects, which had been independently approved by Australian Research Council, were rejected without explanation.

This is political correctness gone mad by an out of touch government which is pandering to its knuckle dragging and right wing philistines.

Last time this happened – in 2004/2005 – there was an outcry from the Australian research community when then Minister Brenden Nelson also vetoed humanities grants – which had also been recommended by the ARC – because they were politically out of favour.

The actions of Minister Birmingham once again bring into question the politicisation of the research grants program by a Liberal Government.

The suppressed grants were in arts, culture, music, history and literature.

Their rejection demonstrates a disgraceful contempt for scholarship by this government.

These were grants from Australian's leading research universities.

In an unprecedented move, the Minister chose to censor applications for [Discovery Early Career Researcher Award](#) Grants and the highly prestigious [Future Fellowships](#).

Even Prime Minister Scott Morrison has said that we must go beyond the titles of grant applications when choosing to fund research and leave it to the experts. *"So, I would say look beyond the headlines of some of these projects."* **Scott Morrison, Interview 2GB, 22 August 2016** This is a Government that says one thing but does another.

## **ATTACHMENT: UNIVERSITIES IMPACTED BY MINISTER'S VETO**

<b>University</b>	<b>State</b>
<i>Discovery Projects round – 2 November 2017</i>	
UNSW	NSW
Australian Catholic University	Victoria
UNSW	NSW
Griffith University	Queensland
Monash University	Victoria
University of Sydney	NSW
<i>Discovery Early Career Awards - 2 November 2017</i>	
ANU	ACT
University of Melbourne	Victoria
UNSW	NSW
<i>Future Fellowship – 28 June 2018</i>	
Macquarie University	NSW
Latrobe University	Victoria



### **OVER 1.1 MILLION AUSTRALIANS OPT OUT OF MY HEALTH RECORD – Catherine King**

**More than 1.1 million Australians have now opted out of the My Health Record following the Government's botched rollout – but the Liberals are still refusing to say what they're planning to do to restore public trust in this important reform.**

Under Labor questioning in Senate estimates on Wednesday, the Australian Digital Health Agency revealed 1,147,000 have now opted out. That's a 200,000 increase in the last month.

This shows just how badly the Government's rollout has undermined public support for a system that could deliver enormous benefits.

Labor maintains the Government should extend the opt-out period until all privacy and security concerns – including those raised throughout the Senate inquiry initiated by Labor – are fully addressed.

However Minister Hunt is stubbornly refusing to heed this call, even though top medical groups like the AMA and RACGP agree with Labor's stance.

Health bureaucrats have also revealed the Government is weighing further changes to the My Health Record legislation based on concerns raised during the inquiry – even though Minister Hunt earlier dismissed the inquiry as a stunt.

Minister Hunt should immediately detail what changes he intends to make so they can be fully considered before the opt-out period ends in November.

Labor supports a national digital health record - which is why we created one when we were last in Government.

But the Government's rushed implementation of an opt-out model created a range of problems not addressed by their woefully inadequate amendments.

Labor intends to move amendments to the Government's bill to ensure:

- **The My Health Record can never be privatised or commercialised;**
- **Private health insurers can never access My Health Records, including de-identified data;**
- **Employees' right to privacy is protected in the context of employer-directed health care, by including a clause similar to s14(2) of the Healthcare Identifiers Act in the My Health Record Act;**
- **Vulnerable children and parents such as those fleeing domestic violence are protected, by narrowing the definition of parental responsibility;**
- **The System Operator (the Australian Digital Health Agency) cannot delegate access to My Health Records to other entities; and**
- **Tougher penalties for breaches of the Act.**

The Government should adopt all of these amendments. Labor is also calling on the Government to commission and independent review of privacy provisions.

### **LABOR'S INVESTMENT IN OVARIAN CANCER RESEARCH – Plibersek/King**

**A Shorten Labor Government will build on its commitment to ovarian cancer research by matching the fundraising target for the Silver Lining Ride.**

The Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation aims to raise \$150,000 through the second Silver Lining Ride, which will see 12 riders tackle the 7-day 700km journey from Canberra to Melbourne.

The event was inspired by two friends – Mandy Herbert and Helen Hatzis - who lost their battles with ovarian cancer within weeks of each other in 2016.

They were themselves formidable fundraisers for this cause, raising \$400,000 for ovarian cancer research. The Silver Lining Ride is a way to honour their legacy.

Labor will commit \$150,000 for the Foundation, matching their fundraising target and helping them in their bid to develop an early detection screening for this terrible disease.

Every year approximately 1,500 Australian women are diagnosed with ovarian cancer - most of them with an advanced stage of the disease because of the lack of effective early screening.

As a result, the five year survival rate for Australian women with ovarian cancer is just 43 per cent. That compares to a 90 per cent five year survival rate for breast cancer.

One Australian woman dies from this disease every eight hours.

The Foundation's research is also aimed at improving treatment methods, so that even those diagnosed in the later stages of the disease will have a better quality of life.

Labor's latest commitment follows a \$12 million ovarian cancer research investment announced in February.

This investment will see the creation of a National Ovarian Cancer Registry; support the development of the Australian Ovarian Cancer Study's world leading tissue bank to deepen research efforts into prevention and treatment; and fund new clinical trials.

In Government, Labor invested more than \$3.5 billion to combat cancer. A Shorten Labor Government will build on this record through commitments like this one.



## **VOICES OF VICTIMS PUT TO THE BANKING ROYAL COMMISSION – Shorten/Clare O'Neil**

**Federal Labor is ensuring the experiences of victims are at the heart of the Banking Royal Commission, releasing a submission of victim stories from roundtables held around the country.**

The Banking Royal Commission has been critical to exposing a systemic culture of misconduct in the financial services sector - but after voting against it 26 times, Scott Morrison gave the Commissioner an extremely short timeframe to undertake such important work.

Only 27 victims have been able to give evidence in person, despite 10,000 submissions being received. Labor has been undertaking roundtables to listen to bank victims and ensure they have a voice in the process going forward.

Labor's consultations have found that bank victims are struggling with the long-term impacts of banking misconduct, aren't receiving adequate compensation and are being forced into lengthy court processes by banks with deep pockets.

The stories we've heard are harrowing - people who have had their families torn apart, lost their homes, lost farms that have been in their family for more than 100 years, developed physical and mental illnesses, or attempted suicide.

These stories must be a part of our national conversation when we consider what our banks must do to regain the trust of the Australian people. The Morrison Liberal Government didn't want these victims to have their voices heard. If they had had their way, the Royal Commission wouldn't even be happening.

Labor will be submitting these stories to the Banking Royal Commission, and will continue to undertake roundtables to meet with as many victims as possible.

These stories reiterate that Scott Morrison needs to do the right thing and extend the Banking Royal Commission.

Labor wants this to be a roadmap for reform - not another royal commission report left in the top drawer.

That's why we are undertaking these consultations and why we will create an Implementation Taskforce.

Labor called for this Royal Commission, Labor fought for this Royal Commission, and Labor is listening to victims to make sure they have a voice in the process going forward.

**Labor's submission is available here:** [https://alp.org.au/media/1378/181026\\_alp\\_banking\\_royal\\_commission\\_submission.pdf](https://alp.org.au/media/1378/181026_alp_banking_royal_commission_submission.pdf).

## **RE-APPOINTMENT OF ROD SIMS – Bowen**

**Labor welcomes the re-appointment of Rod Sims as ACCC Chair but questions the priorities and process of the ATM Government. Mr Sims' term was due to expire in August 2019.**

It is extraordinary that an appointment up in August next year is being filled now and underlines poor government processes on key appointments.

Entering into critical economic appointments this close to the next Federal election should only be done in consultation with the Opposition.

Rushing through appointments without consultation well before terms expire smacks of a government in decline.

It says everything you need to know about the Liberal party that it's more interested in agency appointments that expire in a year's time than it is in landing a bipartisan energy policy now.

And if Morrison and Frydenberg have so much confidence in Mr Sims, why did they ignore him on divestment powers and leave him to find out about the Government's latest thought bubble when reading the newspaper?

## **NO EXCUSES FOR LIBERALS' RECORD DEBT – Chalmers**

**New Government figures released on Thursday show the Liberals are out of excuses for the record and growing debt on their watch.**

The latest [Monthly Financial Statements](#) reveal billions of dollars in extra revenue have been rolling through the door courtesy of a booming global economy.

Despite favourable global conditions helping the Budget, today's figures show net debt has blown out to \$350.9b – more than double the \$175 billion it was when the Liberals came to office.

Under the Liberals, gross debt has crashed through half-a-trillion dollars for the first time ever in the nation's history, and now sits at a record \$540.2 billion.

The Liberals are too busy fighting among themselves to manage the nation's finances properly, which is coming at the expense of funding the essential services Australians rely on.

If the Liberals cared about fixing their Budget mess, they'd end their Muppet Show and stop showering largesse on the top end of town.

Labor will repair the Budget in a fair way by closing down unsustainable tax loopholes for those who need them least, while properly funding essential services like schools and hospitals.

## **READS ALL ABOUT IT – Bowen/Mark Butler**

**Re-appointing Rod Sims for a five year term shows confidence in him from the Government. So why then wasn't the ACCC Chair who had previously considered divestment powers for the energy sector and rejected it, consulted by the former Treasurer Scott Morrison before the Liberal Party floated its latest thought bubble on it?**

When asked about when he found out about it in Senate Estimates this morning, Mr Sims said:

*"I think I can confidently say Senator I found out about it when everybody else did, when I read about it in the newspaper."*

The head of the nation's competition watchdog was not consulted ahead of the announcement of the most extreme and heavy handed set of competition powers there is.

Mr Sims confirmed the view formed in the recent ACCC electricity prices report that considered and rejected divestiture powers:

*"I guess divestiture is such an extreme step that we felt that judgement would be very hard to reach....but that was the judgement we reached Senator and our view hasn't changed."*

The Liberal Party continues to make up energy policy as it goes, moving further and further away from policy that supports the renewable investment that will bring down prices and pollution and actually has an evidence base and is recommended by experts.

#### **PARTIAL TRANSCRIPT**

#### **SENATE ECONOMIC ESTIMATES – ACCC CHAIR SIMS – DIVESTMENT POWERS**

**SENATOR CHRIS KETTER:** *"Did you provide a recommendation to the government for divestiture powers in the energy sector?"*

**ACCC CHAIR ROD SIMS:** *"No, that wasn't one of our recommendations Senator....We did take a different approach."*

**KETTER:** *"When was the first of the government's intention to pursue this policy. Can you just tell us when did you first find out about this?"*

**SIMS:** *"I think I can confidently say Senator I found out about it when everybody else did, when I read about it in the newspaper but I have no idea when that was. That's when I found out about it."*

**KETTER:** *"Did you have any conversation with Mr Morrison beforehand on these powers?"*

**SIMS:** *"I don't think so Senator. I'm just trying to be as clear as I can. We have had a number of discussions obviously with the Prime Minister, previous Treasurer on energy matters as you can imagine. He's taken, when he was Treasurer, a keen interest in our study so we've had a lot of conversations but I think in terms of the divestiture thing, I don't think we have. Certainty I don't think I have."*

#### **LATER ON ...**

**SIMS:** *"...The view we formed was that to make the call on divestiture because it's such a... it has such big implications, it's a difficult judgement to form. You know the larger the implications, the more steps, the more thought that's got to go into doing it. Contrast that with taking people to court which we do all the time, getting penalties against them. We've taken criminal cartel proceedings which could see people end up in gaol. They're sort of graduated steps up and I guess divestiture is such an extreme step that we felt that judgement would be very hard to reach. Now it's absolutely a policy question. There's been a lot of people, and I mentioned Alan Fells, a lot of people have different views on it. I respect all views. Whatever we're asked to do, we'll do. But that was the judgement we reached Senator and our view hasn't changed but you know this is policy questions. It's a purely policy question. Whatever... I mean the Government's there to make these calls. If that's where that goes, then we'll do the job asked of us."*

### **ASIC NEARLY \$200 MILLION WORSE-OFF UNDER LIBERALS – Clare O'Neil**

The Liberal Government's shocking neglect of the corporate regulator has been exposed.

Figures [released today](#) show that the Abbott/Turnbull/Morrison Government has reduced funding to ASIC by almost \$200 million in real terms since coming to office:

Year	Real revenue from Government	Compared to 2013
2013	\$393,957,000	
2014	\$380,011,000	\$13,946,000
2015	\$347,389,000	\$46,568,000
2016	\$330,929,000	\$63,028,000
2017	\$356,938,000	\$37,019,000
2018	\$356,783,000	\$37,174,000
TOTAL		<b>\$197,735,000</b>

This savage cut has hurt ASIC's ability to crack down on corporate misconduct, and undoubtedly has led to companies getting let off the hook. For years, Scott Morrison and the Liberals have been claiming that ASIC has the resources and powers they need to be *"tough cops on the beat"*. But the horror stories flowing out of the Banking Royal Commission show a very different story.

The Liberals are now furiously backpedalling to restore some of this funding to ASIC, but the impact of their savage cuts cannot be undone so easily. For many Australians who have been ripped off and had their lives destroyed by the big banks and dodgy financial service providers, what Scott Morrison is offering is simply too little, too late.

This neglect is shocking – but hardly surprising – from a Government that is only for the top end of town.

The Liberals ran a protection racket for the big banks over 600 days. Prime Minister Scott Morrison voted against setting up a Banking Royal Commission 26 times. And even when they knew about the awful misconduct in the banking sector, they spent a year trying to reward the big banks with a \$17 billion tax cut.

Labor has no tolerance for corporate misconduct. Labor fought for the Banking Royal Commission, Labor committed to a Corporate Crime Taskforce, and Labor will work day and night to protect Australian businesses and consumers from misconduct in the financial services sector.

### **NO CV? NO WORRIES FOR A \$900K TREASURY SECRETARY POST – Bowen**

Senate Estimates has uncovered further evidence of the Liberal Party's crass politicisation of the Australian Treasury through the appointment of Scott Morrison's former Chief-of-Staff as Treasury Secretary.

Most of Labor's questions to the new Treasury Secretary, Mr Phil Gaetjens, was marred by a clear pattern of interference from Mathias Cormann.

In an extraordinary revelation, Mr Gaetjens admitted to not providing a CV to PM&C as part of the appointment process for Treasury Secretary. All the Government could offer was Mathias Cormann's feeble *'the CV of Mr Gaetjens is well-known'*.

Mr Gaetjens wouldn't answer questions on whether or not he advised the former Treasurer Scott Morrison to vote against a Banking Royal Commission twenty-six times.

It was put to Mr Gaetjens that as uncovered via a Treasury Freedom of Information request, Treasury had sent him information that had been requested to attack Labor's reforms to dividend imputation, a fact initially disputed because according to Mr Gaetjens *"I was not either actioning or the direct recipient of that email."* That is not correct.

Federal Labor is concerned that only a few months ago, Mr Gaetjens was the spearhead of political advice to Scott Morrison attacking Labor's policy, and now as Treasury Secretary, he's responsible for Treasury advice on this and any submission it might make to Tim Wilson's Dodgy Inquiry into Labor's reforms to dividend imputation.

Federal Labor has consistently expressed a concern at what such an overtly partisan political appointment means for the development of the incoming Labor Government brief and the production of the independent Pre-election Economic and Fiscal Outlook (PEFO).

**PARTIAL TRANSCRIPTS:**

**ON NO CV:**

**Keneally:** "Mr Gaetjens did you include your time as Chief of Staff to these former Treasurers on the CV you provided to the Prime Minister and Cabinet as part of its appointment process?"

**Gaetjens:** "I didn't apply.... supply a CV to the Prime Minister and Cabinet department"

**Keneally:** "You didn't supply your CV or record of your history to Prime Minister and Cabinet? Did you supply one to anyone as part of your appointment process?"

**Cormann:** "The CV of Mr Gaetjens is well known. I think the Labor party would know the CV of Mr Gaetjens in some great detail."

**Keneally:** "So are you telling me Minister that the Government appointed a Treasury Secretary without getting a copy of his CV?"

**Cormann:** "The appointment process in relation to the position of secretary of any portfolio of any department across the Australian public service is a matter for the Prime Minister's portfolio of course."

**BERNARDI ON GAETJENS – "HIS POLITICS AND HIS ASSOCIATION WITH IT WELL UNKNOWN":**

**BERNARDI:** "We are here to talk about Treasury estimates. We've got a new Treasury secretary. Yes his experience is well known, his politics and his association with it is well known. Can we get on to the substance of what we're meant to be talking about?

**GAETJENS ADVICE TO MORRISON ON BANKING ROYAL COMMISSION:**

**Keneally:** "Mr Gaetjens, how many times did you advise Scott Morrison to vote against a Banking Royal Commission?"

**Gaetjens:** "I can't see how that's relevant with this Estimates hearing, I'm sorry."

**Keneally:** "It's incredibly relevant. A Banking Royal Commission is currently taking place. The Treasurer who you served as Chief of Staff voted against it 26 times. What advice did you provide to him regarding the Banking Royal Commission?"

**GAETJENS RECEIVES TREASURY ADVICE TO ASSIST WITH MORRISON ATTACK ON LABOR'S REFORMS TO DIVIDEND IMPUTATION**

**McAllister:** "Mr Gaetjens, on the Treasury FOI log, there is an FOI numbered 2292. It's a series of documents in response to a request from a Fairfax journalist who sought Treasury briefs or documents provided to the Treasurer's office on the refund ability of dividend imputation. Are you familiar with that FOI document Mr Gaetjens?"

**Gaetjens:** "I do remember one on the issue yes."

**McAllister:** "So you're aware that that comprises a series of emails from Treasury officials to you specifically advising on Labor's dividend imputation policy on the day that that policy was announced?"

**Gaetjens:** "My memory I think was I was copied in, I was not either actioning or the direct recipient of that email."

...

**McAllister:** "Mr Gaetjens, I go back to the FOI that I referred to earlier, 2292, and on the second page of that there is an email from an official and it commences with "Hi Phil and Gerry". There is no other Phil listed in the 'TO's or 'CC's, I assume that that person companionably referred to as Phil is you? It's Phillip Gaetjens."

**Gaetjens:** "I'd have to double check that."

**McAllister:** "Well Mr Gaetjens I'm putting it to you that you are in receipt, you were in receipt at that time of material that was requested in order to attack the Labor Party's tax policies and I'm asking you how you...."

**LIBERAL LIES ON NEGATIVE GEARING – Bowen**

Josh Frydenberg has picked up right where Scott Morrison left on Labor's negative gearing reforms – lying.

The new Treasurer was flat out misleading viewers this morning and appeared completely unaware that the Master Builders Association hadn't modelled Labor's policy and accounted for grandfathering.

On Wednesday morning on Sky News, Mr Frydenberg argued that those currently negative gearing properties would no longer have access to it under Labor's housing affordability reforms.

**LAURA JAYES:** "But Treasurer, it is not correct to say that Labor is ending negative gearing, is it?"

**JOSH FRYDENBERG:** "Well, what they are doing is for the 1.3 million people who currently have negative gearing and all those who are looking to it into the future, will not have the same benefits that they have today, that is the fact."

This is just a lie.

Not much better was Scott Morrison's channelling of Peter Dutton, claiming this morning that Labor's policies would "put our AAA credit rating at risk".

All existing residential property investments are fully grandfathered, meaning those property investors will still be able to access negative gearing.

Meanwhile, the Chair of the Dodgiest Inquiry into Opposition Tax policy, Tim Wilson,

**TOM CONNELL:** "So are you saying that Labor's policy you think would push up house prices?"

**TIM WILSON:** "Well it reduces the volume of housing supply and it will also fragment the market. This is the thing a very complex area but if you actually have some housing attracting some cash benefits, others not then you will get a fragmentation. Some will go up some go down..."

It's back to the future with Malcolm Turnbull arguing our policy would push prices down and Kelly O'Dwyer arguing our policy would push prices up, all on the same day. This time though, Mr Wilson was making both arguments in the same sentence!

Given the Liberal Party sat on Treasury advice when Scott Morrison was Treasurer that showed only a modest impact on house prices resulting from Labor's reforms, it's now time for both the Prime Minister and Treasurer to stop the lies and drop the desperate scare campaign.

**MASTER BUILDERS NEGATIVE GEARING MODELLING IN SEARCH OF A POLICY – Bowen**

Some Australians reading the front page of today's *The Australian* would be forgiven for thinking the Master Builders Association has modelled Labor's reforms to negative gearing and the capital gains tax discount.

It does NOT.

This research does NOT model Labor's reforms to negative gearing – the Master Builders admit themselves that they fail to account for the fact Labor's policy fully 'grandfathers' existing property investments meaning any investment purchases before the start-date are protected.

The Master Builders 'modelling' assumes that on Day 1 of Labor's policy, all property investors who are currently negative gearing immediately lose access to negative gearing.

That is a major flaw in the modelling – that does not represent Labor's negative gearing reforms.

To be fair to the Master Builders Association, they did meet with the Shadow Treasurer to present their report back in June this year. In that very meeting they were told that their modelling had that flaw in it. Four months later and the modelling has not changed.

The chief executive of Stocklands, Mark Steinert, one of Australia's largest property developers, said on Labor's policy and its focus on new properties "our business will rip".

Earlier this year, Scott Morrison was caught out sitting on [Treasury advice](#) that showed modest impacts as a result of Labor's negative gearing reforms.

Labor is not 'ending negative gearing' – it's reforming it to ensure it works best for the economy and jobs by retaining it for new properties only. Any property investments made before the policy start-date will still be able to access negative gearing.

And we are retaining negative gearing for new properties, so if property investors want to access negative gearing, they'll need to buy a new property and that generates all of the construction and jobs that goes along with it.

Labor is the only major political party with housing affordability policies that put first home buyers on a level playing field with investors, return revenue to the Budget bottom-line, and promote financial stability.

### **COALITION UNCOOPERATIVE OVER COOPERATIVES AND MUTUALS REFORMS – Leigh**

**Almost two years after Labor unveiled our policy on the co-operative and mutual sector, and almost a year after the Coalition said they would back the reforms, the Morrison Government is still yet to draft all the necessary legislation.**

In [November 2016](#), we announced that a Shorten Labor Government would amend the Corporations Act to define mutual enterprises and implement reforms to facilitate new financial instruments for member-owned firms such as credit unions, building societies, insurance providers, and mutuals such as motoring societies.

Labor's cooperatives and mutuals reforms will promote ethical competition and productivity, as well as encouraging social investment and the well-being of workers and small businesses.

Despite such benefits, it took the Coalition [12 months](#) to announce its support for Labor's reforms. Almost 12 months after that, the Coalition has drafted only part of the required legislation.

In that time, the Coalition have cycled through two Prime Ministers, two Treasurers and multiple assistant ministers. If only the Coalition were as cooperative as the sector, perhaps these changes could have happened more quickly.

Labor congratulates the stakeholders who have advocated for cooperatives and mutuals reforms, particularly the Business Council of Cooperatives & Mutuals and the Customer Owned Banking Association.

## **VETERANS**

### **MORRISON'S \$40 MILLION CUT LEAVING VETERANS WITHOUT SERVICES – Rishworth**

**This week during Senate Estimates, the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), confirmed that the \$40 million cut in this year's Budget to allied health services which was made by the then Treasurer, now Prime Minister, Scott Morrison will result in less services for veterans.**

This year's Budget, handed down by Scott Morrison himself saw \$40 million cut from critical allied and dental health services for our veterans. Labor called on Scott Morrison and the government to ensure this would not result in reduced services for our veterans.

However, DVA officials were forced to admit this week that this \$40 million cut in Scott Morrison's Budget to allied health relies on veterans accessing fewer services.

Senate Estimates, Department of Veterans' Affairs, Wednesday, 24 October 2018;

*SENATOR FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA, ALEX GALLACHER: Is it true that these changes are expected to save \$40M over two years?*

*DVA OFFICIAL: Yes, over the forward estimates*

*GALLACHER: What's underpinning that figure is that veterans accessing fewer services?*

*DVA OFFICIAL: Its primary veterans having fewer services, yes, particularly in musculoskeletal...*

Our veterans, ex-service personnel and war widows deserve timely access to clinically necessary treatment, and this \$40 million cut will only create more barriers to these services. Morrison must explain why he thinks veterans deserve less service.

### **DVA OVERSEES A 30 PER CENT INCREASE IN LEGAL FEES – Rishworth**

**On Wednesday night during Senate Estimates the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) confirmed its legal fees have jumped by 30 per cent from the financial year 2016/17 to 2017/18.**

In the financial year 2016/17 there was an expenditure of \$10.27 million on legal fees.

In the financial year 2017/18 this increased by \$3 million to \$13.26 million.

Officials from DVA confirmed that this jump was predominantly towards preparing cases for the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT), with 25 per cent of this increase for litigation at the AAT.

*"...In particular we've seen an increase in AAT litigation on VEA matters, which has essentially escalated 25% a year in. So it would be fair to say that a fair proportion of that expenditure has been on AAT legal matters." (Wednesday, 24 October 2018)*

The AAT is the last stop for veterans to have their cases or decisions reviewed. Last night in Senate Estimates, officials from DVA agreed that a good KPI would be not going to the AAT at all.

The government must explain why there has been a 30 per cent jump in legal fees associated with fighting veterans in the AAT.

## **SENIORS**

### **A YEAR OF INACTION AND SLOW PROGRESS ON AGED CARE – Julie Collins**

**Thursday marked a year since the release of the Carnell-Paterson Report into aged care regulation and since this time the Liberals have done too little to progress this important body of work.**

The Liberal Government has fully implemented just one of the report's ten recommendations.

Labor called for the implementation of the one recommendation it has clearly introduced – unannounced reaccreditation audits for residential aged care facilities - six months before the Government adopted it.

Legislation to enact another of the review's recommendation – the creation of a new Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission – is yet to be debated in the Senate. **The new Commission is meant to begin on 1 January, 2019.**

The Government cannot use the Royal Commission as an excuse to delay action on progressing this work now.

The inaction fits a pattern for the Liberal Government – it has sat on more than a dozen reports and reviews into aged care and done little.

To date the Liberals have responded to less than half of the recommendations of the Tune Review into aged care.

The Carnell-Paterson Report reaffirmed what we already know – the regulation of aged care is letting too many older Australians down. It is clear the current regulatory framework that should be protecting older Australians in care is not working. The current reporting of complaints in Australia's residential aged care facilities is overly complex and accessing information about specific complaints and accreditation failures is also difficult. Labor is concerned the Government's new Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner will not have strong enough powers to protect consumers. The Government's legislative response was a missed opportunity to give the new Commission stronger powers given the level of public concern and we still don't know when this will pass the Parliament. It is critical to the future of the aged care sector that families can have faith and confidence their loved ones will be safe and receive a high level of care in residential facilities. Morrison and the Liberals must do better to ensure older Australians get the quality aged care services they need.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### **MORE BROADBAND UNCERTAINTY FOR REGIONAL BUSINESSES – Jones**

**Regional Communications spokesperson Stephen Jones MP, says regional wireless broadband businesses, whose future viability is threatened by the looming auction of the 3.6 Ghz spectrum they occupy should be deeply frustrated at the lack of response by the Morrison Government to their needs.**

Under questioning at Senate Estimates this week, officials from the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) confirmed that despite the spectrum auction proceeding next month, the ACMA are still struggling to find equivalent spectrum for wireless internet service providers (WISPs). These small regional businesses are providing valuable wireless broadband, both inside and outside the NBN satellite footprint, to around 200,000 customers.

The lack of action to support regional Australian businesses is apparent from ACMA also acknowledging that there is little equivalent spectrum left for WISPs. Even options in the 3.8 to 4.2 GHz band, used by the satellite industry, may not be viable as it is not a globally harmonised band for the services WISPs deliver.

In the rush to auction spectrum for 5G services, the Morrison Government has been slow to address this matter and is putting these regional businesses at risk.

Labor wants the 5G spectrum auction to proceed as soon as possible – but the WISP problem must be addressed by the Minister as a matter of urgency.

We apparently have a Minister for Regional Communications – and a Minister for Regional Development – but to date, neither of those Ministers who claim to represent the interests of regional Australians in the Morrison Government, have shown any interest in this issue. The Government must ensure that these regional Australians are not left worse off by the planned spectrum auction.

### **NBN CHAIRMAN MISFIRES ON VALUATION OF THE NBN – Rowland/Chalmers**

**On Tuesday night at Senate Estimates, in a concerning departure from reality, the NBNCo Chairman claimed the NBN [could be sold for \\$50 billion](#), despite the damage inflicted by the Liberals' multi-technology mess.** The Chairman stated:

***"I could certainly generate - and do generate - figures around \$50 billion for the value of this company in the early 2020s."***

This estimate is at odds with analysis by auditing firm PwC, who in 2016 [estimated a value of \\$27 billion](#).

Standard & Poor's have also issued a scathing assessment, saying a write down of the multi-technology mix ***"appears inevitable"***.

Given the significant difference of opinion, Labor calls on the NBNCo Chairman to provide evidence or analysis to support his claim.

**If he cannot, he should withdraw or correct the statement.**

As it stands, the Liberals' multi-technology mix is \$22 billion over budget and four years behind schedule.

### **FIFIELD GOES MISSING ON ACCESSIBLE COMMUNICATIONS – Rowland/Brown**

**Minister Fifield has again failed to answer when work would conclude on vital communications services.**

The new tender for the National Relay Service (NRS) closed in May this year, and while the current contracts are due to expire in January 2019, the Government has failed to finalise plans for the service.

***"We're hearing real concern from the community, they want to know what the future of accessible communications services will be,"*** said Shadow Minister for Communications, Michelle Rowland.

The NRS is essential for Australians who are deaf, deafblind or who have speech impairment, looking to communicate over the telephone network.

Yet the Government has provided no further information about what future arrangements for the NRS will hold.

At the same time, when asked about work being done on Audio Description services for the blindness community, Minister Fifield could only limply respond:

***"I'm not in a position to advise further."***

This is despite officials revealing Departmental advice has been on the Minister's desk for several months.

***"Minister Fifield has had the Working Group Report on Audio Description since May this year,"*** said Carol Brown, Shadow Minister for Disability and Carers.

***"It's completely unacceptable that after two trials, a consultation and a Departmental report, the Minister has no plans, over five months later"***.

The ongoing lack of information from this Minister is extremely concerning. Australians with disabilities deserve better.

The Government needs to act to protect the rights of all Australians.

The Government needs to stand up and provide certainty on the future of accessible communications services in this country.

No amount of wishful thinking can undo this fact.

## CONSUMER AFFAIRS

### GOVERNMENT DISARRAY DELAYS TICKET SCALPING REFORMS – Burke/Madeleine King

**Treasury officials have confirmed today that crucial reforms to ticket scalping laws were delayed because of the Liberal leadership crisis.**

When asked in Senate Estimates why the 31 August Consumer Affairs Forum was cancelled, and rescheduled for 26 October, Treasury officials confirmed it was because there was a change in the Minister responsible for consumer affairs.



The change in the Minister responsible for consumer affairs (now the Assistant Treasurer Stuart Robert) was a direct result of the Liberal leadership turmoil. This means consumers have had to wait nearly 2 months to see any movement on ticket scalping reforms, because the Liberal Party is in chaos.

The Forum, which brings together Australian and New Zealand consumer affairs and fair trading ministers, is important for Australian consumers.

Changes to the Australian Consumer Law can only happen following agreement between the government and the states. It's not just a talk fest – the forum is the machine room for the significant legislative agenda for consumer affairs and protection matters.

So now, as we draw nearer to the summer music festival season, Australian consumers are still at risk of being exploited by ticket scalpers and face exorbitant resale prices, because of the government's inaction and reckless disregard for consumer protection.

People will continue to be ripped off by websites like fake ticket reseller Viagogo, where consumers are being exposed to the dishonest practice of being sold fake or overpriced tickets.

Concerts, festivals and other live entertainment are one of the biggest discretionary purchases that consumers will make each a year. Consumers deserve to know that their hard earned money will purchase them a legitimate ticket to the advertised event.

This government continues to fail Australian consumers.

## FIRST PEOPLE

### ESTIMATES UNCOVERS BIG CUTS TO REMOTE HOUSING – Cameron

**Friday's Senate Estimates have highlighted the failure of Indigenous Affairs Minister Nigel Scullion to negotiate a new remote Indigenous housing agreement with the states and territories.**

Shadow Housing and Homelessness Minister, Senator Doug Cameron, said today's hearings also exposed the scale of the Coalition's cuts to remote housing.

In its May Budget, the Coalition effectively axed the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing (NPARIH), which had invested \$5.4 billion over the previous decade to address severe overcrowding.

The Government's own [independent review](#) clearly states that "high levels of overcrowding and poor housing condition negatively impact on outcomes in health, education, employment and safety."

The decision left Western Australia, Queensland and South Australia without any ongoing funding arrangement for remote Indigenous housing.

Evidence today from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet revealed that contrary to claims by Minister Scullion that "there are no cuts to housing", no new Commonwealth funds have been delivered this year.

"As a matter of urgency, Minister Scullion must establish a program of negotiations with state and territory governments to resolve future Commonwealth funding arrangements for remote Indigenous housing," Senator Cameron said.

"Priority must be given to a building program that assists in reducing the negative health implications of severe overcrowding."

Reports by the ABC just this week have drawn attention to the prevalence of Rheumatic Heart Disease in remote Indigenous communities. RHD is a preventable illness affecting about 6,000 Australians, with Indigenous children 55 times more likely to die from the disease than their non-Indigenous peers.

The causes can be as common as repeated throat and skin infections, caused by living in overcrowded housing conditions, but the consequences can be devastating, leading to permanent heart damage and even death.

"Despite the seriousness of the issues, Minister Scullion's performance today was aggressive, amateurish and incompetent," Senator Cameron said. "It's clear that if the Minister is unable to reach agreements with the states and territories he will be responsible for the ongoing poor health outcomes in remote communities."

Labor believes a committed, ongoing partnership from all levels of government is essential to meet the scale of the need in remote communities.

The Morrison Government should be working cooperatively with Indigenous communities to ensure services are delivered as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Senator Cameron said that in light of Minister's performance, Prime Minister Morrison should seriously consider whether he has confidence in his ability to carry out his responsibilities in the portfolio.

### LABOR CONDEMNS FAKE INDIGENOUS ART – Burke/Madeleine King



**Federal Labor has welcomed the Federal Court's finding that Birubi Art Pty Ltd (Birubi) misled customers by selling fake Indigenous art. These products were found to be made overseas, with the company claiming that products it sold were made in Australia and hand painted by Indigenous Australian artists, which is a breach of Australian Consumer Law.**

Birubi Art Pty Ltd was found to have misled consumers into thinking they are buying genuine handmade Indigenous art when they are not – rather, their products were made in Indonesia.

Fake 'Indigenous-style' art is popular with tourist and souvenir stores who are able to sell wonderful Australian art such as decorated boomerangs, clapping sticks or digeridoos. Fake, mass produced and misleading products undercut legitimate artists and devalue genuine Indigenous cultural expression.

Labor supports the rights of Indigenous Australians to protect their cultural and intellectual property, and is committed to protecting consumers from false or misleading representations.

Members of the Labor Party are actively participating in the Parliamentary inquiry to inauthentic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 'style' art and craft products and we look forward to seeing its recommendations.

## CHARITIES

### POOR CHOICE FOR CHARITY COMMISSIONER– Leigh/ McAllister

**Labor is saddened by the most recent comments by the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits commissioner Gary Johns.**

The revelations have come on Thursday night in evidence before Senate Estimates where the Commissioner publicly confirmed he still holds troubling views about charities, welfare recipients and indigenous mothers.

**SENATOR MCALLISTER:** *"Dr Johns, you've previously argued that people on government allowances should be required to take contraception. You've described indigenous mothers as cash cows, attacked indigenous charities and criticised Beyondblue. Have you done anything to dispel any perception of bias that might have arisen from those previous public comments?"*

**JOHNS:** *"No and I don't need to as the commissioner."*

**SENATOR MCALLISTER:** *"It seems fairly more directly relevant to your role than an acknowledgement of country, because those remarks go very directly to the charitable purposes of the organizations that you regulate."*

**JOHNS:** *"They're not in my signature block. That's the issue. They carry the Commonwealth seal, if you like, the ACNC which is a Commonwealth body under law. That's my concern."*

**SENATOR MCALLISTER:** *"So have you disavowed those views, Dr Johns, or are they still your views?"*

**JOHNS:** *"Sorry, I missed that."*

**SENATOR MCALLISTER:** *"Have you disavowed those views?"*

**JOHNS:** *"Absolutely not. I don't, you know - I'm quite public. I've written for 30 years about a whole range of matters. Why would I seek to disavow any of that?"*

Mr Johns' attitudes to Indigenous Australians, women, the LGBT+ community and our charity sector across the board mark out a man who is drastically out of touch with the Australian community.

He reflects the true colours of the Coalition government – unsurprising as he was hand-picked by Peter Dutton's hatchet man, Michael Sukkar, and signed on under former Treasurer Scott Morrison.

We know this out-of-touch government put Gary Johns in charge of the nation's charities commission. What remains to be heard is their explanation of how he can possibly remain there given his comments.

**Is Zed Seselja, the sixth minister responsible for charities, comfortable leaving Mr Johns in his role regulating Indigenous charities given his comments on indigenous women?**

**Should he regulate mental health charities given his beyondblue comments? Can he fairly regulate inclusion charities given his comments on LGBT+ organisations?**

**Is the Prime Minister confident that Mr Johns has adhered to APS values?**

Our nation's charities deserve answers.

## THE LAW

### FAMILY COURT CEO CASTS DOUBT ON PWC REPORT CLAIMS – Dreyfus

**Chief Executive and Principal Registrar of the Family Court Warwick Soden has cast doubt on a key assumption in a management consultants' report, which the government has used to justify its planned amalgamation of the Family and Federal Circuit Courts.**

The PwC report entitled [Review of the efficiency of the operation of the federal courts](#) states, as a key assumption, that:

*PwC has been informed that, in practice, both the courts hear matters of similar complexity.*

The report's conclusion – that the Family Court is less efficient than the Federal Circuit Court because it takes longer to deal with family law cases – is directly related to this assumption.

But when questioned during Senate Estimates today, Mr Soden said:

*My expectation would be, and I think the Judges of the Family Court would correctly assert that the cases that they dealt with are in the **more complex** category. So I think, in other words, I think it's fair to say that the Family Court and the Federal Circuit Court deal with complex cases, but the Family Court deals with the **very complex cases**.*

The government's reliance on a single management consultant's report – without talking to a single family actually caught up in the family law system – always seemed bogus.

Now the Chief Executive of the Family Court itself has punched a hole through the report's credibility.

The government needs to consult properly, and come up with a better explanation for why it thinks its model is the right one for reform, and will not simply result in significant upheaval for no real change.

### PORTER'S GAG HAS CHILLING EFFECT ON AUDITOR INDEPENDENCE – Dreyfus/Hill

**Reports in The Guardian today show Attorney-General Christian Porter has used extraordinary powers to hide the Auditor-General's findings on whether a major defence procurement project delivered value for money for the Commonwealth.**

This decision risks a chilling effect on the Auditor-General's independence, as other agencies begin to raise the possibility of seeking certificates from the Attorney-General to censor their own audit reports.

For the first time ever, the Attorney-General's powers were used under Section 37 of the *Auditor-General Act* to force the Auditor-General to delete large slabs of an audit report into a \$2.2 billion purchase of the Australian Army's Protected Mobility Vehicle–Light.

According to the Guardian, material removed relates to conclusions regarding the value for money that Australia received from Thales after the Liberal Government decided not to pursue an open tender process.

The request to invoke these extraordinary powers came at the request of a private multinational company, Thales, for a certificate under section 37(2)(e) of the Act, to prevent "unfair prejudice" to their commercial interests.

The Attorney-General has tried to cloak his decision to protect Thales' commercial interests, by claiming censorship was needed to protect the "security, defence or international relations" of the Commonwealth under section 37(2)(a) of the Act.

But in evidence provided to the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit (JCPAA) the Auditor-General revealed that when the draft report was completed for release in January 2018, he "**had worked through all national security issues**" with the Department of Defence which **had no outstanding defence or security concerns** about the audit's publication.

It was only many months after Thales lodged a case in the Federal Court on 5 January and asked the Attorney-General to censor the audit report that Liberal Ministers then claimed the audit report's publication would prejudice Australia's defence and security.

Now, the Auditor-General has given evidence that he fears more agencies may threaten to gag him:

*"...since this issue has arisen ... I think for the first time in the course of our work agencies are starting to raise with us issues about seeking certificates on matters. So, while some of the conversation's been about how this has only happened once, one of my concerns around some of the issues and processes here is that, for the first time for us, people are starting to flag this as a course of action early in processes. That's one issue that has concerned me since this time."* [Auditor-General, Mr Grant Hehir, 19/10/18, JCPAA Public Hearing]

While Mr Porter's actions were within the bounds of the Act, it is clear such powers should be used in extraordinary circumstances only. Mr Porter has still not given a valid explanation as to his actions in this case – it's not good enough.

Independence of the Auditor-General is absolutely central to any claim of credibility of parliamentary control over the executive in the Westminster system.

Labor is committed to strengthening integrity including through the introduction of a National Integrity Commission, and will carefully consider the need for possible changes to the Auditor-General Act after the JCPAA has completed its inquiry.



### APVMA PORK BARREL NOW A SICK JOKE – Fitzgibbon

Knowing it would never secure Parliamentary support, in 2016 the Government had Finance Minister Mathias Cormann issue a Government Policy Order (GPO) which forced the relocation of the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) from Canberra to Armidale.

The GPO dictates that APVMA staff cannot be employed in Canberra.

But when it became clear - as Labor warned – that the APVMA could not secure the necessary workforce in Armidale, Barnaby Joyce's hand-picked APVMA CEO Dr Chris Parker sought legal advice as to whether he could employ APVMA staff in Canberra, contrary to the GPO.

Allegedly, the legal advice is the basis on which Dr Parker is now recruiting and employing staff in Canberra. Labor calls on the Government to urge the APVMA to release this advice.

In Senate Estimates on 24 October 2017, Dr Parker clearly stated that he could not keep a Canberra based office as it "**would be against the government order.**"

The forced relocation has cost Australian taxpayers tens of millions of dollars and proceeded despite the Government's own cost-benefit analysis warning against it.

It's not just the taxpayer losing out. The forced relocation is affecting the performance of the APVMA and that is bad news for farmers, owners of companion animals, the environment and consumers of food products.

It is time for the new Prime Minister to step in and put a stop to this farce before more damage is done and more money wasted.

### MINISTER ANXIOUS TO RELEASE MOSS REVIEW – Fitzgibbon

Senate Estimates this week confirmed the [Moss Review](#) into the culture of the live animal export regulator has been delivered to Minister for Agriculture David Littleproud, but he is choosing not to release it.

Secretary of the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, Daryl Quinlivan said "**I know the Minister has been anxious to release it.**"

Minister Littleproud has had the Moss Review report since 27 September, well after the promised date.

Since then the Department has provided the Minister with advice based on the recommendations from the review. We are told there are costs associated with the adoption of the recommendations. Littleproud must explain exactly what is preventing him from making the report's important findings public.

Especially since he indicated last week at the National Farmers' Federation National Congress the review would prompt a '[reset](#)' for live animal exports. The delay in the review's release creates further confusion and uncertainty in the industry and is a reflection of the overall chaos and dysfunction of the Morrison Government.

**Senator Richard Colbeck was also unable to give a timeframe on when the review would be released.** It's crystal clear there is nothing stopping them from doing it now. The fact is the Morrison Government cannot be trusted to do the right thing, everything they do is motivated by their own internal machinations.

Given former Agriculture Minister and Nationals leader hopeful Barnaby Joyce is lurking in the shadows, we suspect Minister Littleproud is under pressure to impede significant changes to the Department's regulation of the live export trade.

In the meantime, export licenses [continue to be granted](#) for live sheep export voyages, hundreds of thousands of sheep are stranded in the supply chain and struggling farmers are being kept in the dark. The Morrison Government has not offered affected farmers any assistance. The release of the review must build and maintain public confidence in the agriculture sector's practices to ensure sustainable profitability.

The Government must release the Moss Review report today.



### ONE YEAR LATER IT IS TIME FOR CASH TO COME CLEAN - O'Connor

Last Tuesday marked one year since Minister Cash was engulfed in the scandal which saw her office admit to unlawfully leaking to the media the Registered Organisation Commission raid on AWU offices, and it is more than time she answered questions.

Once again, Labor calls on Senator Cash to stop avoiding scrutiny and finally tell the truth following evidence in Senate Estimates that the Australian Federal Police has completed its investigation into the unlawful leaks.

The AFP told Senate estimates today that their investigation into the unlawful leak is complete and a full brief of evidence was forwarded to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions on the 20<sup>th</sup> August 2018.

**SENATOR CAMERON:** "So the investigation is complete as far as the AFP is concerned?"

**DEPUTY COMMISSIONER CLOSE:** "Yes, Senator." [SENATE ESTIMATES, 22 OCTOBER 2018]



Yet, even though the investigation is complete, we still do not know whether Minister Cash cooperated with the AFP. Did she provide a witness statement? Was she interviewed as a suspect?

Unanswered questions also remain as to how far this scandal extends regarding the involvement of other Ministerial offices, with the AFP admitting that other Ministerial offices have provided information to the investigation.

**CAMERON:** "Have you received any other external information other than from Senator Cash?"

**CLOSE:** "We received information from a range of witnesses and people, Senator."

**CAMERON:** "Including other Ministerial offices?"

**COMMISSIONER CLOSE:** "Yes."

[SENATE ESTIMATES, 22 OCTOBER 2018]

It is now a year since the Government's politicisation of the ROC was sensationally exposed. It is a year since Minister Cash misled the Senate five times by falsely

denying that her office was the source of the leak. It is a year since the AFP launched a criminal investigation into the leak.

Yet, Minister Cash is still hiding from scrutiny.

Senator Cash's conduct is treating the Parliament and the Australian people with contempt.

### **LABOR'S FORCES GOVT TO ACT ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE – O'Connor/Burney**

**The Liberals' have finally listened to Labor's persistent calls to bring on their bill for 5 days unpaid domestic violence leave for debate in the parliament.** Following Labor's call yesterday for the government to give priority to this bill, the Liberals have altered the schedule for the House of Representatives, and have listed it - however we note that it is last on the notice paper.

We further call on the government to amend the bill, to adopt Labor's commitment to 10 days paid leave.

Almost twelve months ago, Labor committed to introducing 10 days paid domestic violence leave into the National Employment Standards if a Shorten Labor Government is elected.

Nothing less will suffice.

The combined stress of finding safe accommodation, seeking legal advice, accessing counselling services and medical treatment should not be compounded by the fear of losing your job or the financial disadvantage of going without pay.

No one should have to choose between their safety and their income.

Labor has listened to victims, frontline workers, businesses, unions and organisations that deal daily with domestic violence. Their clear message is that people who have experienced domestic violence need more support in the workplace.

State governments and many private sector employers already provide paid family violence leave, including Carlton & United Brewery, IKEA, NAB, Qantas, Telstra, Virgin Australia. These employers, and many others, have paved the way and helped reduce the stigma that often accompanies domestic violence. So too have Australia's unions, campaigning for paid domestic and family violence leave over many years which has led to subsequent coverage in Australian workplaces.

The complexity of family violence requires a strategic approach by all levels of government, business, and the community.

*If you cover this story, or any story regarding violence against women and children, please include the following tagline:*

**\*\*\* If you or someone you know is impacted by sexual assault or family violence, call 1800RESPECT on 1800 737 732 or**

**visit [www.1800RESPECT.org.au](http://www.1800RESPECT.org.au). In an emergency, call 000" \*\*\***

### **12 MONTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF AUTO MANUFACTURING – Carr**

**Last Saturday marked 12 months since the Liberal Government allowed Australia's last vehicle production plant to close.** In its last year before the Liberals took power, the Australian car industry spent almost \$700 million per year on research and development and generated exports worth \$3.7 billion.

This R&D effort – and support from the then Labor government – had led to a number of new, high technology manufacturing initiatives and general expansion of the industry, such as Toyota establishing a new hybrid engine plant in Altona and Holden commencing manufacture of the mid-size Cruze.



The supply chain also benefited with Nissan Casting winning a contract to supply components for the Nissan Leaf electric vehicle and Carbon Revolution commercialising the world's first one-piece carbon fibre wheel.

Many firms in the supply chain – like Nissan Casting and Carbon Revolution – still prosper, servicing international customers.

Skills and technologies developed in the auto industry are being used in other industries.

But at a time when the automotive industry is about to go through its greatest transformation in 100 years – the move to electric and autonomous vehicles – Australia risks being side-lined due to the loss vehicle manufacturing capability and the Liberal governments continuing hostility and indifference to manufacturing industry.

The end of vehicle production in Australia will be a lasting testament to the Liberals' disastrous disregard for manufacturing and jobs in Australia.

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Shadow Minister for the Environment

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## CURRENT SENATE INQUIRIES – AS OF FRIDAY 26 OCTOBER 2018

### Community Affairs Legislation Committee

- [Social Services Legislation Amendment \(Maintaining Income Thresholds\) Bill 2018](#)
- [Social Services Legislation Amendment \(Encouraging Self-sufficiency for Newly Arrived Migrants\) Bill 2018](#)

### Community Affairs References Committee

- [Support for Australia's thalidomide survivors](#)
- [Accessibility and quality of mental health services in rural and remote Australia](#)
- [Effectiveness of the Aged Care Quality Assessment and accreditation framework for protecting residents from abuse and poor practices, and ensuring proper clinical and medical care standards are maintained and practiced](#)

### Economics References Committee

- **New** [Credit and financial services targeted at Australians at risk of financial hardship](#)
- [Financial and tax practices of for-profit aged care providers](#)
- [The Commitment to the Senate issued by the Business Council of Australia](#)
- [Regional Inequality in Australia](#)
- [Consumer protection in the banking, insurance and financial sector](#)
- [Non-conforming building products](#)

### Economics Legislation Committee

- **New** [Treasury Laws Amendment \(Making Sure Every State and Territory Gets Their Fair Share of GST\) Bill 2018 \[Provisions\]](#)
- **New** [Treasury Laws Amendment \(Making Sure Multinationals Pay Their Fair Share of Tax in Australia and Other Measures\) Bill 2018 \[Provisions\]](#)
- [Treasury Laws Amendment \(Design and Distribution Obligations and Product Intervention Powers\) Bill 2018](#)
- [Treasury Laws Amendment \(Making Sure Foreign Investors Pay Their Fair Share of Tax in Australia and Other Measures\) Bill 2018; Income Tax \(Managed Investment Trust Withholding Tax\) Amendment Bill 2018; Income Tax Rates Amendment \(Sovereign Entities\) Bill 2018](#)

### Education and Employment Legislation Committee

- **New** [Higher Education Support Amendment \(Cost Recovery\) Bill 2018, and the Higher Education Support \(Charges\) Bill 2018](#)

### Education and Employment References Committee

- [The appropriateness and effectiveness of the objectives, design, implementation and evaluation of jobactive](#)
- [The exploitation of general and specialist cleaners working in retail chains for contracting or subcontracting cleaning companies](#)
- [The high rates of mental health conditions experienced by first responders, emergency service workers and volunteers](#)

### Environment and Communications Legislation Committee

- [Treasury Laws Amendment \(Improving the Energy Efficiency of Rental Properties\) Bill 2018](#)

### Environment and Communications References Committee

- **New** [The allegations of political interference in the Australian Broadcasting Corporation \(ABC\)](#)
- [Impact of feral deer, pigs and goats in Australia](#)
- [Gaming micro-transactions for chance-based items](#)
- [Australia's faunal extinction crisis](#)
- [Great Barrier Reef 2050 Partnership Program](#)
- [Australian content on broadcast, radio and streaming services](#)
- [Rehabilitation of mining and resources projects as it relates to Commonwealth responsibilities](#)

### Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

- [Intelligence Services Amendment \(Enhanced Parliamentary Oversight of Intelligence Agencies\) Bill 2018](#)

### Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee

- [Defence Amendment \(Sovereign Naval Shipbuilding\) Bill 2018](#)

### Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee

- [Use of the Quinoline anti-malarial drugs Mefloquine and Tafenoquine in the Australian Defence Force](#)
- [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals \(SDG\)](#)

### Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee

- [Freedom of Information Legislation Amendment \(Improving Access and Transparency\) Bill 2018](#)
- [Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia \(Consequential Amendments and Transitional Provisions\) Bill 2018, Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia Bill 2018](#)
- [Freedom of Speech Legislation Amendment \(Censorship\) Bill 2018, Freedom of Speech Legislation Amendment \(Insult and Offend\) Bill 2018, Freedom of Speech Legislation Amendment \(Security\) Bill 2018](#)
- [Australian Citizenship Legislation Amendment \(Strengthening the Commitments for Australian Citizenship and Other Measures\) Bill 2018](#)
- [Judiciary Amendment \(Commonwealth Model Litigant Obligations\) Bill 2017](#)

### Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee

- **New** [The effectiveness of the current temporary skilled visa system in targeting genuine skills shortages](#)
- [The practice of dowry and the incidence of dowry abuse in Australia](#)

### Red Tape Committee

- [The effect of red tape on private education policy and process to limit and reduce red tape](#)

### Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

- [Performance of Airservices Australia](#)

### Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee

- **New** [The independence of regulatory decisions made by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority \(APVMA\)](#)
- [The operation, regulation and funding of air route service delivery to rural, regional and remote communities](#)
- [The integrity of the water market in the Murray-Darling Basin](#)

**Select Committee into the obesity epidemic in Australia**

- [Obesity Epidemic in Australia](#)

**Select Committee on Charity Fundraising in the 21st Century**

- [Charity Fundraising in the 21st Century](#)

**Select Committee on Electric Vehicles**

- [Electric Vehicles](#)

**Select Committee on Stillbirth Research and Education**

- [Stillbirth Research and Education](#)

**Standing Committee of Privileges**

- **New** [Development of a foreign influence transparency scheme to apply to parliamentarians](#)
- **New** [Possible improper interference with a Senator in the free performance of his duties](#)
- **New** [Disposition of material obtained in the execution of a search warrant](#)