

# Reducing the Cost of Living

After 16 years of Labor Government, our cost of living has skyrocketed. We pay some of the highest utility prices and state taxes in the nation and we think that's simply not good enough. That's why we will undertake the following measures.

## Liberal Energy Solution

Our comprehensive energy solution will drive down wholesale prices which will reduce average household electricity bills by over \$300 per year, with businesses saving even more.

Key components of this solution include:

- \$200 million Interconnection Fund, enabling us to import and export more electricity from the national grid
- grants averaging \$2,500 per household to help install batteries in 40,000 homes
- banning exit fees and enforcing minimum notice period on changes to energy contracts by retailers
- improved reliability by bringing currently underutilised generation capacity into the market when we need it.

## Slashing ESL bills

We will slash Emergency Services Levy bills by \$150 for the average household, putting \$90 million back into the pockets of South Australian families and businesses.

This cut in the ESL will cover all eligible fixed property regardless of the type of land use, providing relief to households, businesses, farmers and a wide range of community groups.

We will ensure this tax cut applies from 1 July 2018, while maintaining the current level of emergency services provided to South Australians.

## Reducing the cost of road maintenance

We will reduce the cost of road maintenance for regional councils, easing pressure on council rates while ensuring quality rural roads.

We will reverse an earlier decision by the Weatherill Government to remove the exemption for paying extractive mineral royalties on road rubble pits owned by local governments.

## Capping council rate rises

We will cap council rate increases, ensuring councils continue to provide high quality services without exposing ratepayers to excessive increases in council rates year on year.

The cap will be calculated on a measured and transparent basis to reassure property owners they are not paying more than they should.

As part of this process, an independent regulator will determine the appropriate cap on a region by region basis, recognising that council costs can vary between regions.

## Capping NRM levies

We will cap land and water levy increases through our new Natural Resource Management structure which will ensure spending is kept under control.

NRM levies have consistently increased well beyond CPI, adding to cost of living pressures for households, businesses and farmers.

Our cap will ensure transparency in how levies are spent, with all levies collected in a region to be spent in that region.

The cap applied will be set by an independent body.

## Water pricing inquiry

We will establish an independent inquiry into water pricing to ensure South Australians pay a fair price for water and don't continue to be ripped off by the government.

South Australians pay some of the highest water prices in the nation, with average water bills rising by 232 per cent while Labor has been in government, compared to inflation running at only 43 per cent.

An independent inquiry is the only means of establishing what the real price of water should be in South Australia, with the outcomes of this inquiry to inform improvements to pricing policy.

