

COUNTRY LABOR DIALOGUE

CONNECTING COUNTRY COMMUNITIES – NOVEMBER 2015

Nats should put country schools before politics

Labor is calling on National MPs and Senators to take a stand against the Liberals' cuts to regional, rural and remote schools in NSW.



Federal Shadow Minister for Rural Affairs Joel Fitzgibbon says every child deserves access to a quality education no matter where they live.

Federal Shadow Minister for Education, Kate Ellis, has written to Nationals parliamentarians urging them to put their electorates first and political deals second.

Under Labor's Gonski reforms, 40 per cent of the additional investment was set to benefit country schools. Instead, the Government's cuts will leave over 1.5 million country students more than \$12.5 billion worse off over the next decade. In NSW, that is less money for the 125,000 students in 971 schools in

regional and remote NSW.

"Labor believes that every student – no matter where they live – deserves a great education. Country students need action now and deserve so much more than cuts from the Liberals and indifference from the Nationals." – Kate Ellis Federal Shadow Minister for Education

It's not too late for the Nationals to do the right thing and demand Malcolm Turnbull and the Liberals reverse their school cuts.

Jay Suvaal writes...



It's been another busy month with trips to visit the Camden Haven, Orange, Branxton-Greta and Wollondilly Branches as well as holding Campaign Insight training days with Eden-Monaro and Hume FEC's.

Thanks to all the dedicated members who are already out campaigning for the Federal election.

Congratulations to the Goulburn Branch on hosting another successful Deniehy Oration, I thoroughly enjoyed the night learning about Goulburn's importance in the debate for a republic.

This month I'm looking forward attending the Louisa Lawson Luncheon in Gulgong and the Eddie Graham Dinner in Wagga Wagga.

Thank you to all the members who took the time to vote in the Country and Rural NSW Ballot for the State Policy Forum. Congratulations to Trent, Leanne, Sharon, Asren and Melanie on your election.

Jay Suvaal
NSW COUNTRY ORGANISER

Coming Events

► GILMORE CAMPAIGN INSIGHT

DATE Sunday,
8 November 2015
TIME 10:30 AM
VENUE Bomaderry
Bowling Club

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► LOUISA LAWSON LUNCHEON

DATE Saturday,
14 November 2015
TIME 12:00 PM
VENUE Gulgong
Opera House

.....

► EDDIE GRAHAM DINNER

DATE Saturday,
28 November 2015
TIME 6:30 PM
VENUE
Wagga Wagga

.....

► NSW LABOR STATE CONFERENCE

Sydney Town Hall
13-14 FEB 2016

.....

To see all upcoming
Country Labor events visit
countrylabor.com.au/events

If you have an event you
would like to promote
to other Country Labor
members please email it
to jay@nswlabor.org.au

Priorities laid bare

In releasing his new “State Priorities”, Premier Mike Baird said “you need to set priorities in order to achieve results”. It is just a shame his priorities don’t include anything for country NSW.

Across the 30 priorities and eight pages of the Premier’s glossy plan there is no mention of agriculture, primary industries, rural affairs or regional development.

The picture on the cover is of Sydney’s skyscrapers – which just about sums it up. The Premier’s focus begins and ends with the Sydney CBD.

Rural NSW is entirely absent from the Premier’s plan for the future of NSW.

In 2011, the Coalition promised to create 40,000 jobs in rural and regional NSW in its first term.

This promise was broken. Instead, unemployment increased by more than 34,000 and regional unemployment increased from 5.9 per cent to 8.3 per cent.

The promise of 40,000 jobs was just a cruel and cynical lie.

In one of his first acts after being re-elected this year, the Premier abolished the positions of the Minister for Western NSW and the Minister for the North Coast. These were clear signals he was not interested in regional issues and did not want to hear from regional representatives.

The Nationals MP, Kevin Humphries, put it plainly:

“We’ve worked hard to put Western NSW around the Cabinet table on a number of different issues... but you’ve kicked everybody in western NSW in the guts, and I don’t use that term lightly.”

Since then the government has continued to ignore regional areas.

The TAFE facilities at Scone, Murwillumbah, Trenayr, Narrandera, Corowa and Grenfell are all to be completely sold. Other towns face having their TAFE campuses carved up and subject to partial sale.

All up, there are 21 regional towns facing TAFE cutbacks or complete closures.

Students wanting to study primary industries at Scone will have to drive 120 kilometres to undertake studies at Kurri Kurri. Driving education opportunities out of regional towns will make it even harder for people to train or retrain and get new skills.

NSW needs a regional plan.

Luke Foley MP,
NSW LABOR LEADER

This is an edited version of an article by Luke Foley published in The Land on 26 October 2015. To view the full version visit the Country Labor Facebook page at facebook.com/countrylabor



CSG: Community victory on Northern Rivers

The Northern Rivers community has achieved a great win! After enormous pressure the State Government will be buying back three petroleum exploration licenses (PEL) from Metgasco.

But the NSW Labor Opposition is not done yet – it is clear that only legislative change can permanently protect the North Coast.

Labor's Coal Seam and Other Unconventional Gas Moratorium Bill 2015 represents the hard work of thousands of community members on the North Coast, and seeks to create a 'no-go zone' across the entire region.

Supporting the bill would ensure that the Northern Rivers is permanently protected.

“The community can lay claim to an enormous victory towards protecting their homes and environment from CSG and unconventional gas,” said Adam Searle MLC



Justine Elliot and Walt Secord are calling on the Government to make the North Coast CSG free permanently.

Aero-medical funding cuts: Patients wait hours for help

Rural and regional patients needing emergency aero-medical winching support are being forced to wait hours for help – due to the Baird Government health cuts.

Last month, a seriously injured 58 year-old man was forced to wait on a cliff face in Warrumbungle National Park for an extra two hours after the initial helicopter was unable to rescue him, forcing one equipped with a winch to be flown up from Newcastle.

The lack of properly equipped aero-medical services in the New England region is a result of cuts made by NSW Health Minister Jillian Skinner and the Baird Government in 2013.

Tamworth Regional Council called on the NSW Health Minister Jillian Skinner to reverse the cuts and restore the service. In 2013, there was a 10,000 plus signed petition in the New England calling for the restoration of the winch service.

“Time and time again we are forced to see the human cost of the Baird Government's \$3 billion in cuts to the health and hospital system,” said Walt Secord



Standing ovation *at* Deniehy Oration

A renowned social researcher was the special guest at Goulburn's third annual Deniehy Dinner, held to celebrate 19th century republican Daniel Deniehy by Country Labor's Goulburn Branch.

ANU Social Researcher Dr David Headon received a standing ovation for his speech, which focused on the continuing importance of the Republican movement as a goal for our country.

Daniel Deniehy moved from Sydney to Goulburn in 1854 to practice as a solicitor and quickly made a name for himself as a vigorous advocate for an Australian Republic.

A fantastic night was had by all who attended. Congratulations to the Goulburn Branch for organising another wonderful Deniehy Oration.

Labor MPs in attendance included Senator Deb O'Neill and former Senator and state candidate Ursula Stephens.



Chair of the Australian Republican Movement Peter FitzSimons with the NSW Labor team at the Deniehy Oration in Goulburn.

State Policy Forum election results

Country Labor would like to congratulate the five successful rank and file candidates for State Policy Forum from Country NSW.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the ballot. There was strong voter turnout in online and postal votes and enthusiastic member engagement through the Facebook forum.

When the ballot closed on Wednesday 28 October 2015 the results in order of their election were:

1. Trent Gilbert
2. Leanne Atkinson
3. Sharon Sewell
4. Asren Pugh
5. Melanie Dagg

Congratulations to all the candidates. We thank them for their passion and professionalism during the ballot.



Do you have a story or a photo for **Country Labor Dialogue**?

Email your story and photos to jay@nswlabor.org.au