

# COUNTRY LABOR DIALOGUE

CONNECTING COUNTRY COMMUNITIES – JUNE 2017

## Another budget for the city. Nothing for the regions

Malcolm Turnbull and Scott Morrison fail again.



This budget is ideological, unfair, and extremely conservative.

This is another budget that ignores the regions completely.

For yet another year, the funding promised for mobile black holes is not there.

For yet another year failed policies like the concessional loans program remain a centrepiece of agriculture policy.

Barnaby Joyce's relocation pork barrel hits the Agriculture budget for tens of millions of dollars, yet \$19.5 million in cuts to the Rural Research and Development for Profit Program have not been restored. Barnaby's 'white elephant' is being paid for at the expense of agriculture research.

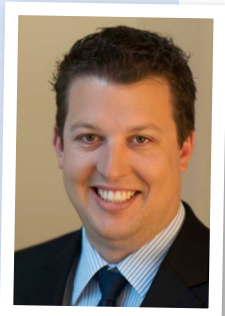
The past four years of rebate freeze have been lifted for hard-pressed rural GPs, but no restoration in funding is in sight. While it won't be getting worse, there will be no increase in bulk-billing under this government and regions will still get poorer health care than people in the cities.

The centrepiece of this Liberal/National budget is their funding of the Inland Rail project. What they won't tell you is that this is a Labor project with funding promised and initiated by Labor, and which the Coalition government cut in its first three budgets.

They can undo some of their cuts and expect fanfare for it, but country communities know better than that.

## Jay Suvaal writes...

It has been another busy month for Country Labor with a huge number of Branch, SEC and FEC meetings.



With visits to New England FEC, Hunter FEC, Port Macquarie SEC, Dubbo SEC, Lyne FEC and Riverina FEC & Cootamundra SEC, I've been racking up the kilometres to get to as many as I can and really appreciate the warm welcome I have received. Special mention should go to Dubbo SEC this month, who introduced a guest speaker to talk about the urgent local issue of recovery services.

We're now only a few weeks from State Conference, so it's great to see so many policy ideas being raised, discussed, and submitted.

Finally, thank you to the Gilmore FEC for another fantastic night at the Dame Mary Gilmore Dinner, this is really turning into a must do event!.

Please contact me on [jay@nswlabor.org.au](mailto:jay@nswlabor.org.au) or **1800 503 035** if there is anything I can help you with.

**Jay Suvaal**  
COUNTRY ORGANISER

# Country Labor on the trail



Jay Suvaal with the Port Macquarie SEC.



Kaila Murnain, Jay Suvaal, Jenny Aitchison MP and former Minister John Kerin with members at the Dame Mary Gilmore Dinner.



Dubbo SEC with Jay Suvaal and guest speaker Jason Chatfield.



Kaila Murnain and Jay Suvaal with members of Riverina FEC and Cootamundra SEC in Young.

## Bega Hospital report reveals secret privatisation plans

NSW Labor has described a report into South East Regional (Bega) Hospital as “damning” – but said the “most alarming” aspect was the discovery of the State Government’s secret privatisation plans buried in the report.

In March, there was a public meeting attended by more than 400 locals worried about the state of Bega Hospital, its crisis in orthopaedic surgery and lengthy elective surgery waiting lists.

Walt Secord MLC said the 32-page report released this month by NSW Health failed to address the “elephant in the room” the crisis in orthopaedic surgery at the hospital.

Walt Secord pointed to the report’s buried revelation that the Berejiklian Government is examining privatisation of health services at Bega Hospital.

The report said:

“To this end, the (Southern NSW Local Health) District is exploring options such as the expansion of outpatient services at SERH and possibly attracting a private hospital operator to open private beds within [Bega Hospital].”

This is another step in the Liberal-National State Government’s creation of a two-tier health system – where patients who can afford private health insurance get priority over public patients, particularly, the elderly.

It is also the fifth hospital outside Sydney to be earmarked for privatisation by the Berejiklian Government. The other hospitals are Maitland, Shellharbour, Bowral and Wyong.



# Non-partisan model for North Coast flood damage relief

In the wake of flooding in Tweed and Lismore, Opposition Leader Luke Foley announced a non-partisan flood package to help the community recover.



Justine Elliot MP, Luke Foley MP, and Walt Secord MLC on the North Coast.

Cyclone Debbie hit the North Coast in March, and the region has not yet fully rebuilt.

The Labor package includes the waiving of payroll tax and the setting up of one-off infrastructure and business assistance funds for local councils and employers.

Further, there is an expansion of the existing housing and business flood raising and purchasing plan for those in flood prone areas.

The package was developed after a meeting with Murwillumbah and Lismore businesses affected by the floods and was chaired by Federal Richmond MP, Justine Elliot and attended by NSW Labor leader Luke Foley and Shadow Minister for the North Coast Walt Secord.

The package proposal came about after an underwhelming response to the flood damage by the Berejiklian government. It is intended as a model for the response to any natural disaster that may occur after March 2019.

## NSW Labor proposes billions for the regions

**NSW Labor will support the sale of the Snowy Hydro scheme to the Federal government – only if there is a guarantee that the scheme stays permanently in public hands and if every dollar from the billions raised is used in regional NSW.**

Luke Foley committed a Foley Labor Government to ensuring 100% of the funds raised from selling the Snowy Hydro will go to rural education, health, roads, water, and culture facilities.

Visiting Queanbeyan with Bryce Wilson, Country Labor's candidate for the Monaro, Luke Foley noted that the suburb of Googong will grow from 2,000 residents to 20,000 residents in the next 15 years – yet the State Government has no plans for a primary school in the area.

This kind of neglect is repeated in every regional centre in NSW.

Snowy Hydro Limited is currently co-owned by NSW (58%), Victoria (29%) and the Commonwealth (13%). In the recent budget, the Commonwealth government proposed acquiring complete ownership in order to progress its plan to invest in additional electricity generation.



Luke Foley MP with Bryce Wilson.

**Industry estimates are that NSW's share of the sale would be between \$4-5 billion.**

## Coming Events

▶ **8 JUNE**

**STATE  
CONFERENCE**

Agenda items  
deadline

▶ **10 JUNE**

**JEFF CONDRON  
MEMORIAL  
DINNER**

Port Macquarie

▶ **28 JULY**

**STATE  
CONFERENCE  
COUNTRY  
DELEGATES  
RECEPTION  
DINNER**

Sydney

▶ **29-30 JULY**

**STATE  
CONFERENCE**

Sydney Town Hall

To see all upcoming  
Country Labor events visit  
[countrylabor.com.au/events](http://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](mailto:jay@nswlabor.org.au)

I N V I T A T I O N

# THE JEFF CONDRON

## INAUGURAL MEMORIAL DINNER

Saturday  
10 June 2017

6pm for a  
6.30pm start

## Seasons Restaurant

Cassegrain Wines

764 Fernbank Creek Road

Port Macquarie



### GUEST SPEAKER:

**Senator Sam Dastyari**

THE MAN WHO BROUGHT AUSTRALIA  
THE HALAL SNACK PACK!

### TICKETS:

\$70

COMPLIMENTARY SPARKLING

BLANC DE BLANC OR BEER ON ARRIVAL

### RSVP CONTACT COLLEEN CARMODY:

Phone: 0419 255 350 or

Email: [colleen.carmody7@gmail.com](mailto:colleen.carmody7@gmail.com)



## REGISTER AS AN OBSERVER FOR STATE CONFERENCE

**TO REGISTER PLEASE GO TO:**

[www.nswlabor.org.au/conference2017](http://www.nswlabor.org.au/conference2017)

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

Email your story and photos to [jay@nswlabor.org.au](mailto:jay@nswlabor.org.au)