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**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Time to talk about issues**

COUNTRYMINDED candidate Pete Mailler said he agrees with sentiments made earlier this week in the Northern Daily Leader by Tamworth mayor Col Murray about some candidates contesting the by-election with no understanding or commitment to the electorate.

Pete said he was as surprised as everyone by the final number of candidates on the ticket.

“I think Cr Murray has a point about candidates who don’t know or understand the electorate,” he said.

“Where did all these candidates come from? Many of them wouldn’t know how to pronounce Wallabadah, let alone know where it is.

“However, while I do question the motives of some of the candidates’ parties, being from “out of town” is not a reason to discount a candidate. The Nationals candidate should know, because he was an out-of-town candidate who chose New England because he couldn’t get preselected at the time in his home electorate of Maranoa.”

Pete said he and CountryMinded know what the important issues are in New England through its roots. CountryMinded was borne here and we are committed here. We genuinely represent the New England regardless of any office.

“This whole out-of-towner thing is a smokescreen designed by the Nationals to distract voters from thinking too hard about the real issues. They would be the issues the Nationals candidate does not want to be questioned about, and there are more than a few,” Pete said.

“CountryMinded has outlined its plan for a renewable energy hub, which has been viewed almost 7000 times on Facebook, proving people are interested its vision for the electorate.

“CountryMinded has also issued its plan for New England to lead an Australian medicinal cannabis industry and our views on climate change and small business are modern, progressive and practical.

“These are all things the Nationals candidate wants to avoid debating in a public forum, but they are issues that could affect every person in the electorate. Important issues like energy, employment, health, education and infrastructure are taboo to the Nationals candidate. He’s just not interested.

Pete said it was time for New England to send Joyce, and the government, the clear message that it wants a better deal and give them the fright of their lives by voting for CountryMinded first.

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