

THE NATIONALS
for Regional Victoria

Gaelle's Gazette

Summer 2024/25



Merry Christmas & *Happy New Year!*

As we reach the end of 2024, we're now halfway through this term of parliament and less than 100 weeks away from the next State election!

It's been another busy year of Parliament, committee hearings and meeting people across the electorate.

This newsletter shares some highlights, and to stay informed across the year I invite you to connect on Facebook or Instagram, or visit my website at gaellebroad.com.au.

The Nationals team are the only political party focused on rural and regional Victoria, and if you would like to discuss any state government matters, please get in touch.

Wishing you and your loved ones a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Kind regards,

Gaelle Broad



A change of direction

Hundreds of regional Victorians rallied outside the All Seasons Hotel, where Premier Jacinta Allan was speaking at a Rural Press Club lunch, in August this year.

The rally reflected the high level of community fury over the Allan Labor Government's treatment of regional Victorians as second class citizens and the lack of consultation with regard to the renewable energy roll-out. Residents feel they have been treated with contempt. Decisions are being made without consultation. It's clear that Labor cannot manage money and does not care for rural and regional Victorians.

The Nationals and Liberals have released a Regional Energy Development Policy that will reinstate the right of appeal to VCAT that Labor stripped away, because those most affected in regional communities deserve to be heard.

Access to our parks

Jason from PMAV (Prospectors and Miners Association of Victoria) met up with Melina Bath, Peter Walsh and myself to talk about the threats to outdoor pursuits if the Victorian Labor Government establishes more national parks in Victoria.



Labor's health cuts

During this year, Emma Kealy the Deputy Leader of the National Party, came to Bendigo where we met with concerned locals about the cuts to health.

One local shared their story of how when they dialled 000 for an ambulance while having a severe allergic reaction, the fire brigade turned up as there were no available ambulances.

Labor continues to prioritise city-based projects and leave regional Victoria behind.



Labor's neglect of our CFA

Our local CFA brigades are rightfully concerned about some of the decisions the Labor Government has made when it comes to protecting and supporting our volunteer firefighters. Documents from Fire Rescue Victoria revealed that 193 vehicles in the CFA's 2,322-strong fleet are over 30 years old, while 429 are more than 25 years old.



Innovative road maintenance

I had the opportunity to visit the National Transport Research Organisation (NTR) in Port Melbourne during the year. The NTR take an innovative approach to road maintenance and safety through technological advancements. While the Allan Labor Government continues to fill over 700 potholes a day, instead of building better roads.



Marong bus advocacy

During the year I was contacted by locals who asked if the Maiden Gully bus route could be extended to Marong – just a few kilometres away – to service residents, families and school children travelling to work and school. After raising the matter in Parliament, the Minister advised me that she has directed the Department of Transport and Planning to take the request for additional bus services into consideration as part of ongoing network review and planning activities.



2024 regional sitting

In April, Parliament of Victoria's Legislative Council held a regional sitting in Echuca. The major natural disaster that hit the region in October 2022 prompted bipartisan support for the upper house to travel out of Melbourne and rekindle the tradition of holding a formal sitting away from the state capital. It follows on from the Legislative Council's successful 2021 regional sitting held in Bright, which was the first time in a decade that such a large-scale parliamentary event had been conducted in regional Victoria.



Big Ideas Forum

This year Senator Bridget McKenzie and I held a conference discussing the impact AI is having on our regions.

Huge thanks to everyone who attended and contributed to this important discussion. It's timely that we look at what is happening with AI right now.



Bendigo Pottery

After being flooded in January, it was great to meet Ray and Kylie from Bendigo Pottery to celebrate their reopening.

It's an iconic tourist destination that manufactures clay in Bendigo, and exports it around the world including Singapore, France, Hong Kong and New Zealand.



2024/25 State Budget

I thought last year's state budget was bad. This year it's worse. Due to Labor's financial mismanagement, we are currently paying over \$18 million every single day on interest payments. Labor continues to raise taxes because they keep wasting taxpayer money on projects like the Suburban Rail Loop. A change of government is desperately needed to restore transparency and get our state back in the black, and back on track.

THE NATIONALS for Regional Victoria

Gaëlle Broad MP

Member for Northern Victoria

Your local voice in Parliament

gaellebroad.com.au

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Local Council Inquiry

The local council inquiry was established to investigate a number of key areas including cost shifting from state and federal governments to local councils. The report was tabled in Parliament in the last sitting week of 2024.

It can be viewed online at www.parliament.vic.gov.au/get-involved/inquiries/localgovernmentfunding/reports/.

Flood Inquiry

This year I was a member of the committee that conducted the inquiry and heard first-hand the many distressing stories of people affected by the 2022 floods. Farmers were flooded when water storages were released without warning, and crops and livestock were lost. Inaccurate flood warnings caused widespread confusion. Roads and bridges were torn apart, and councils are still waiting for funds to repair them. Residents were sleeping on wet mattresses. Homes were gutted, and some residents have waited over 12 months for insurance claims to be resolved. We were told emergency volunteers had been waiting up to six years to do training courses. Critical infrastructure such as levees, dams and culverts were inadequate and there was a severe shortage of sandbags.

Online grants were made available in areas with no internet access, and businesses destroyed by floods were overwhelmed by the paperwork required to prove it.

It was clear from the stories we heard that Victoria was not well equipped to respond to a flood of this scale, and there is much work that still needs to be done to prepare us for the future. The Government has six months to respond. The report is available on the Parliament's website. The report was formally tabled in Parliament on July 30.

Reports:

Liberal and Nationals' Financial Integrity Plan

The new financial integrity plan released by the Nationals and Liberals reflects our commitment to better manage taxpayers' money. The new approach is called 'Our Plan for Financial Integrity'.

It includes measures to ensure taxpayers' money is managed carefully, so we can deliver positive outcomes for all Victorians, not just those in the city.

Integrity and transparency should be first and foremost when it comes to managing public money.

Yet time and time again we have seen billions of taxpayer dollars frittered away by the ongoing financial mismanagement of the Allan Labor Government.

Under Labor, Victoria has the highest taxes and debt in the nation. Victoria's state debt is set to reach a record \$187.8 billion by 2027-28, with interest repayments to exceed \$1 million every hour!

The Nationals and Liberals' new plan is simple – we will manage your money better so we can deliver what really matters to you. A future Nationals and Liberals Government will implement a financial integrity plan based on three key commitments:

- A legislated Charter of Budget Honesty - a detailed financial strategy and plan to be published at the beginning of each Parliamentary term and reported against in Budget and Mid-Year Financial Updates;
- A real-time public expenditure tracker - A new website will report government expenditure at the portfolio level, allowing Victorians to see how their taxpayer funds are being spent in real time; and
- A Victorian first Intergenerational Report to be completed by the newly established Victorian Productivity Commission. This will provide a long-term outlook for the Victorian economy and State and be updated every five years.

This new plan is about cleaning up the books and restoring proper financial management. You can read it here:



The next State election in November 2026 is now 100 weeks away, and it can't come soon enough.

THE NATIONALS for Regional Victoria

Our Nationals team

It's great to be part of a strong Nationals team, representing the issues that matter to our regions in the Victorian Parliament. The federal election is just around the corner, and The Nationals' are pleased to have a great candidate in Bendigo, Andrew Lethlean. Andrew has been a local business owner for over 20 years so he understands the issues locals are facing. To keep up to date with the latest news from across the state, visit www.vic.nationals.org.au



During the 16 sitting weeks of the year I spoke over 120 times in Parliament on a range of issues including;

- Spoke in support of an Inquiry into the CFMEU
- Spoke in favour of providing more support to foster carers
- Supported an Inquiry into Ambulance Services in Victoria
- Advocated for public access to public land for all Victorians
- Advocated for communities directly impacted to be properly consulted in relation to renewable energy projects and VNI West.
- Spoke in opposition to the gross spending of billions of dollars on the Suburban Rail Loop
- Called for an increase to CFA and SES funding to support our brigades
- Tabled a petition calling on the Minister for Agriculture to support Bridgewater in tackling the corella infestation
- Advocated for more support for our police
- Voted against the Labor Government's Holiday Tax
- Spoke about the amazing volunteers in Northern Victoria
- Spoke in favour of keeping the Lord's Prayer in Parliament
- Opposed the Youth Justice Bill 2024 due to it further removing power from police and courts
- Stood against water buybacks
- Advocated to implement a tobacco licencing scheme in Victoria

To view speeches in Hansard or learn more about the Victorian Parliament visit:
www.parliament.vic.gov.au

Can we help you?

Do you need help with any State Government matters? Please contact our team for assistance at gaelle.broad@parliament.vic.gov.au or call us on 1300 423 533.

Or you can visit our electorate office at 30 Queen Street, Bendigo.

Gaelle Broad MP

The Nationals Member for Northern Victoria

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Photo from left:
Bart, Linda
and Karen