

AGRICULTURE

1. Zero Net Emissions

Women's Conference

That this Conference calls for The Nationals to welcome moves by agricultural industries to achieve zero net emissions and put in place policies to support farmers to achieve this goal.

CARRIED

At a state level, Peter Walsh and Steph Ryan have advocated for governments to embrace and support the net zero ambitions of peak industry bodies, such as in agriculture. Along with the existing 2050 Net Zero target in Victoria that the Liberals and Nationals will support once elected to government, further policies to specifically support farmers and regional communities will be part of a comprehensive 2022 State Election platform. Demonstrating this commitment to responsible emissions reduction action, Peter Walsh launched a report by EY and Farmers for Climate Action (FCA) in September 2021. FCA also wrote a letter thanking Peter for his leadership on the matter and calling for further Federal action. The Federal Government has since set a 2050 Net Zero target with The Nationals' firmly at the decision-making table. Darren Chester has been a strong voice for more climate action and a Federal Net Zero target, while Bridget McKenzie has been at the cabinet table ensuring regional Australia is not duded in any transition.

News articles can be found [here](#) and [here](#)

COVID-19

2. Covid-19 Management Plan

Women's Conference

That this conference calls on the Victorian Government to revise its management of COVID by adopting the NSW model of geographic restrictions and a single mandated government-controlled app.

WITHDRAWN

DISABILITY

3. Disability Support Workers

Women's Conference

This conference calls for disability support workers and personal care attendants to be governed by a professional body to ensure that all care givers reach a professional standard of practice and care delivery.

CARRIED

Currently there is a Federal and State disability registration scheme which exists to ensure a standard of care. The need for any further regulation must be delicately balanced to ensure staffing levels are not impacted, particularly in regional areas where ongoing staffing issues exist.

Further information on the standard can be viewed [here](#) and [here](#)

EDUCATION

4. Greater Shepparton Secondary College

Shepparton AEDC

That this conference condemns the Victorian Education Minister and the Member for Shepparton for their destruction of secondary education in Shepparton and Mooroopna and calls for the return and proper funding of the previous four campuses which will provide choice for students and their families.

CARRIED

5. School Principal Contracts

Women's Conference

That this conference calls on the State Government to review regional school principal contracts and how they are renewed with more accountability to school council and parents.

CARRIED

ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

6. Public land management

Lockington and District Branch

That this conference calls The Nationals to advocate for increased funding for Parks Victoria to be allocated towards a full program relating to parks, road maintenance and cultural burning.

AMENDED – CARRIED

The Nationals actively advocated for a better approach to public land use in parliament and through the media. A passionate bush user, Melina Bath is the Shadow Assistant Minister for Public Land Use.

Melina Bath highlighted the government's poor policy and mismanagement of threats to public land in Victoria through the Legislative Council's Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria, authoring a Minority Report on behalf of The Nationals and Liberals. The Minority Report gave a voice to the submissions and testimony ignored in the Committee Report. It highlighted how much of the ecosystem decline in Victoria is a direct result of poor government policy, inadequate execution of programs and mismanagement of the major threats such as fire, invasive species and predators on public land.

The report presented evidence to the Inquiry indicating that:

- Bushfire, invasive species and introduced predators (and not sustainable timber harvesting) are the main threats to our forest ecosystems.
- The 'Safer Together' bushfire policy has failed and contributed to the 2019-20 bushfires.
- The 'Victorian Forestry Plan' is flawed, replacement plantations are unlikely to be fully implemented, and the plan will lead to lower economic output and job losses in regional areas.
- VicForests has professionally managed the 415,000 hectares of public forest under its charter and meets a raft of audits of its environmental performance.
- DELWP and Parks Victoria have not managed the 7.8 million hectares of public native forest well and these agencies need organisational improvement, not more legislative/regulatory band-aids.
- Improved management of ecosystems on private land requires strategies that make remnant native vegetation etc. more valuable rather than more costly, through mobilising volunteer effort, targeted grants and less rather than more regulatory red (green) tape.
- Victorian public and private land management is currently covered by a plethora of legislation and regulation which has not worked and impedes rather than supports continuous improvement.

Melina Bath's Minority Report can be read [here](#)

7. Animal manure

Moyhu Branch, Victorian Young Nationals

That this conference condemns the Andrews Government's current policy to treat livestock manure as industrial waste and supports its continuation as farm byproduct.

CARRIED

In February 2021, the State Liberals and Nationals condemned the Labor and EPA proposal to treat livestock manure as industrial waste, calling it a 'regulation for regulation's sake'. This view remains the view of the Opposition and informs our platform for the 2022 State Election.

A Country News article can be found [here](#)

8. High country cattle grazing

Benambra AEDC, Ballarat FEDC/ Wendouree-Bunninyong AEDC

That this conference recognises that cattle grazing in the Victorian high country has occurred for more than 150 years and calls on state governments that have banned cattle grazing in national parks to reverse these decisions.

AMENDED – CARRIED

Our Mountain cattlemen are recognised by The Nationals as a part of our living culture, and they play an important part of our history and settlement.

The Nationals continue to be strong supporters of the Mountain Cattleman's Association of Victoria and their cultural connection to the high country. Nationals' MP support the Cattleman's Cup and actively contribute to 'Voices of the Mountain' publication.

9. Dingoes

Lowan AEDC

That this conference deplores the ludicrous proposal to reintroduce dingoes into the Grampians National Park and surroundings, as held in the Greater Gariwerd Draft Management Plan.

CARRIED

The Nationals rejected the proposal to reintroduce dingoes in the Grampians National Park and surroundings on the basis that releasing Dingoes as Apex predators has statewide implications.

During the Inquiry into Legislative Council's Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria, Melina Bath reported that releasing dingoes as apex predators would have devastating

impact on domestic and native animals. Farmers who already suffer great stock losses from wild dogs have also suffered from recent bushfires and floods.

The Minority Report Recommendation No 7 states The Nationals and Liberals oppose the reintroduction of dingoes as an apex predator.

Melina Bath is also comments on this issue in the below article.

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Farmers say no to dingo

Stock & Land, Melbourne

Page 1 of 3

Farmers say no to dingo

New proposal shocks locals

BY **BRUCE EISHOLD**

FURIOUS farmers up in arms over a plan to reintroduce dingoes as an apex predator into the Victorian bush have likened it to "putting a fox in a chook coop", labelling it as "pure stupidity".

The recommendation in the inquiry into ecosystem decline in Victoria proposes the trial reintroduction of dingoes into "suitable Victorian ecosystems" would assess ecological benefits and be designed with input from ecologists and dingo experts.

The report also urges the government to consider phasing out the use of 1000 baits to control invasive species, and instead promote wider use of "more effective and humane methods" for controlling pests such as wild dogs and foxes.

It comes a year after a joint proposal by Parks Victoria and the three Traditional Owner groups urged the government to reintroduce dingoes into the Grampians National Park to restore native ecological systems and control

pest species.

The plan has since been scrapped, largely due to community angst and the likes of Merino stud sheep breeders John and Rhonda Crawford, Victoria Valley, who gathered more than 4300 signatures from landowners and people who opposed the plan.

Mr Crawford, principal of Rock-Bank Merino and Poll Merino stud, said he was "shocked and in disbelief" when he found out about the latest proposal to introduce dingoes across Victoria.

"This plan is not well thought out or backed up by practical science and it doesn't take into account the history of stock, in particular cattle and sheep, and the role wild dogs have played," he said.

"There has been uproar in the community over this... it's like a war in the bush because people think it's a bloody stupid idea."

The Environment and Planning Committee which has proposed the trial states the plan should also be accompanied by the cessation of lethal control for pest species in the trial area during the test, along with the introduction of a compensation scheme for farmers whose livestock is killed or injured by dingoes.

The committee is made up of 10 MPs - three Labor members, including chair Sonja Terpstra and single members from the Sustain-

able Australia Party, Liberal Party, National Party, Derryn Finch's Justice Party, Animal Justice Party, Australian Greens and an independent Catherine Cumming.

The report said the evidence to reintroduce dingoes to the bush was "compelling".

"As Australia's apex predator, dingoes play an important role in regulating large herbivore populations (for example, kangaroos which may be overabundant in some areas) and can help suppress invasive pest species such as feral goats, foxes and cats," the report read.

"The presence of dingoes in an ecosystem can be beneficial to small marsupials, reptiles, birds and plants.

"Dingoes are also culturally significant to Traditional Owners, some of whom are actively advocating for their return."

One of the two Upper House committee MPs who opposed the report, Nationals Member for Eastern Victoria Melina Bath said the dingo proposal highlighted the "limited understanding that the city-based Labor and Labor-like independents have for regional Victoria".

"The crazy thing about this is that dingoes do not recognise boundary fences or trial plots... meaning that they migrate to a food source and certainly they are going to migrate onto adjoining farmland and injure sheep,

calves, lambs, as well as any other native animals," she said.

Ms Bath said there was value in maintaining dingo populations from a historical and species sense, but said the government should be focusing its attention elsewhere.

"The overwhelming evidence in the report... was that the major threat to our native flora and fauna in Victoria is introduced species - pigs, foxes, wild cats and also mixed species wild dogs," she said.

"So if the government wants to save our native fauna, it should be focusing on methods that remove and control these introduced pest species."

However, Mr Crawford said the proposal did not "stack up financially".

"It hasn't passed the pub test," he said.

"Once you protect dingoes with limited control measures and you place them around Victoria, because there's so much food around with roos and other animals, they will do well for a decade.

"But when roo numbers decline in say a decade, these dingoes could move onto stock."

The Crawfords have since started a petition to oppose the report's recommendations, which has received more than 100 signatures since Saturday.

A Victorian government

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10. Paris Accord

Gippsland FEDC

That this Conferences calls for Australia to pull out of the Paris Accord.

LOST

11. Renewable Energy Facilities

Gippsland South AEDC

That this conference recognises that energy and greenhouse gas benefits of renewable energy facilities are largely captured by urban populations but many of

the costs are borne by rural populations, and calls on The Nationals to develop policies to ensure that the development of energy facilities in rural areas, particularly wind and solar farms, deliver local benefits to local communities and that such facilities are appropriately sited, as best as possible, away from houses, including farm houses.

CARRIED

The State Liberals and Nationals are developing a strong energy policy package for the 2022 State Election that will ensure regional communities are empowered to maximise the benefits of any emissions-related projects. This is supported by the Federal Nationals' commitment to protect regional communities during Australian's Net Zero transition. For example, The Nationals have been pushing for the best outcome for AusNet's Western Transmission Line with an alternative route announced by the Coalition in 2021. We have also welcomed AusNet's decision to compensate landholders who will be affected by their project.

Further resources can be found [here](#)

EMERGENCY SERVICES

12. Fire Rescue Victoria procurement policies

Morwell AEDC

That this conference condemns the Andrews Government for ignoring its own policies in relation to local procurement, specifically in relation to the cleaning of firefighters' uniforms, and calls on the Government to implement a transparent audit process of these policies and make these results publicly known.

CARRIED

The Victorian Nationals continued to push back on the Andrews Government's decision to remove laundry service agreements to launder firefighters' uniforms in state parliament and through the media. This FRV uniform dry cleaning issue extended to include Ambulance Victoria's uniforms after the Andrews Government subsequently cancel local service arrangements in August 2022.

In 2021, Melina Bath worked with local dry cleaners and conducted an investigation on uniform procurement, uncovering the Andrews Government formed a working group to create new dry-cleaning standards and advertised a centralised contract through the VicGov Tenders portal – which the Andrews Government labelled as open and fair. Labor's decision created social and economic stress and this was demonstrated to the media.

In state parliament Melina Bath described the Andrews Labor Government sanctioned directive to cancel regional dry cleaners' contracts as shameful, stating "*Labor's disgraceful decision eats away at the heart of regional small businesses' and called on Minister Neville*

to “reverse this appalling decision and give the local drycleaners a chance to tender for the contracts at a local level,”

Melina Bath highlighted that state government procurement policies are to adhere to the ***‘The Local Jobs First Policy’***, which is designed to support Victorian businesses and workers - *“Labor has an obligation to ensure small and medium size enterprises are given a full and fair opportunity to compete for government contracts – but this tender was designed to be out of the reach of Gippsland’s small businesses.”*

During the Inquiry into the Closure of Hazelwood and Yallourn Power Stations Report Melina Bath highlighted how the state government failed to provide local small business owners with full and fair opportunity to compete for the government contract in breach of its Local Jobs First Policy.

The State Government’s decision to cancel long term local service agreements with local small businesses by stealth was detrimental for the regional economy and resulted in significant financial and emotional stress for local industry.

A news article can be found [here](#)

HEALTH

13. Regional Hospitals

Lowan AEDC

That this conference supports regional cities, such as Horsham, to maintain fully autonomous hospital boards to ensure better local health care and clinical services.

CARRIED

National MPs launched a “Hands off our Hospitals” campaign in April 2021 in opposition to the State Government’s plan to amalgamate local hospitals.

This campaign included local media and petitions. Emma Kealy collected more than 4000 signatures against the amalgamation of local health services.

Emma Kealy also spoke in Parliament about the concerns held by the community for the reduction in health care services as a result of the amalgamation.

Emma Kealy’s member’s statement on this issue can be found [here](#) and further news articles can be found [here](#) and [here](#)

14. Farm injuries

Narracan AEDC

That this conference calls on the Victorian Government to establish a parliamentary committee to investigate the underreporting of on farm accidents and ambulance callouts.

CARRIED

The State Liberals and Nationals have used Question Time in Parliament (and other avenues) to highlight the State Labor Government's community-wide 000 and ambulance crisis. We have also been fighting for greater protections and better reporting for farmers, such as through Peter Walsh's and Melina Bath's amendments to the government's flawed Farm Trespass laws. Further work is ongoing and this specific motion will inform our 2022 State Election platform.

HOUSING

15. Public housing

Morwell AEDC, Gippsland South AEDC, Euroa AEDC, Women's Conference

That this conference notes a lack of public housing across regional Victoria and calls on the Andrews Government to consult with local councils to provide additional properties to alleviate substantial priority waitlists for applicants.

AMENDED – CARRIED

Nationals MPs have strongly campaigned for improvements to public housing availability and kept pressure on the Andrews Labor Government to deliver their promise of more than 12,000 new homes through metro and regional Victoria with 25% of funding to be allocated in regional Victoria.

Nationals MPs have participated in stakeholder meetings with local service providers and local governments to discuss demand and shortfalls, particularly around crisis accommodation.

Danny O'Brien MP has written to the Minister for Housing as well as the Minister for Prevention of Family Violence and Minister for Planning to discuss the factors that are driving up demand for social housing and ask what action is being taken to alleviate this. National MPs have raised concerns in Parliament at lack of housing and the factors that are increasing the demand on social housing.

The Nationals have committed to support local councils with planning flying squads and free up government red tape to deliver 50,000 lots across regional Victoria in an effort to relieve the pressure on the property market that is driving up prices and forcing people into rentals and social housing.

The Nationals opposed the Windfall Gain Tax with Steph Ryan speaking against the tax in Parliament on the basis that it will contribute to future demand on public housing as people are priced out of the market.

Danny O'Brien's Parliamentary speech on this issue can be found [here](#)

INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT

16. Optional four-day working week

Victorian Young Nationals

That this conference moves to investigate the implementation of an optional four-day working week.

LOST

17. Regional Airport

Lowan AEDC

That this Conference calls on the Victorian Government to provide funds to establish regional passenger air services to Victorian regional centres.

CARRIED

This matter falls within the federal jurisdiction, Emma Kealy wrote to the federal Minister for Regional Development earlier this year seeking information on what funding support has been provided to regional airports in Victoria and is awaiting a response.

18. Flying Planning Squad

Ripon AEDC, Women's Conference

That this Conference calls on the Victorian Government to re-establish the rural "planning flying squads" scheme to drive development and investment in Regional Victoria.

AMENDED – CARRIED

In May 2021, Peter Walsh and The Nationals unveiled a key pillar of our 2022 State Election platform - the reintroduction of a planning flying squad to fast-track planning approvals, increase land availability, and unlock 50,000 new lots across regional Victoria. Further announcements will be made to address the Labor-made housing crisis that is impeding regional Victoria's growth.

LAW AND ORDER

19. Trespass Law

Morwell AEDC

That this conference calls upon the Andrews Government to amend the Summary Offences Act 1966 so that people who unlawfully enter privately owned properties may be charged with trespass on the basis that their actions have constituted a threat to property and/or life.

WITHDRAWN

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

20. Rural Rates

Lowan AEDC

That this conference condemns the Andrews Government for cuts to the Victorian Auditor General office and the Victorian Ombudsman, restricting their ability to provide oversight and auditing of Local Government.

AMENDED – CARRIED

The State Parliamentary Team strongly agrees with this motion and have called the government out on these cuts, including during budget reply speeches in 2021.

Peter Walsh's speech can be found [here](#)

MENTAL HEALTH

21. Psychologist Wait Times

Victorian Young Nationals, Women's Conference

That this conference calls on the Andrews Government to establish a database of psychologists who work in regional and rural Victoria so that people struggling with mental illness can easily identify a psychologist, their location, availability and wait time.

CARRIED

The Nationals and Liberals have committed to rebuilding Victoria's mental health workforce if they win government and launching Australia's largest-ever mental health support worker recruitment drive, offering thousands of scholarships and support packages to get more people into Victoria's mental health system as soon as possible. This package includes financial support for people to gain an undergraduate mental health qualification; financial support for tertiary-qualified Victorians to enter our mental health workforce through a post-graduate qualification; and more training places for psychiatrists and psychologists so they can work sooner.

22. Mental Health Resources

Women's Conference

That this conference calls for more collaboration between hospitals, mental health service and the legal system to support those needing rehabilitation and increased funding and training for alcohol and drug resources, staffing and bed availability.

CARRIED

As the Shadow Minister for Mental Health, Emma Kealy has consistently campaigned for improved mental health services and access to services, including those relating to alcohol and other drugs education and treatment programs. Emma regularly liaises with industry bodies and stakeholders, including the Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association, to gain feedback about the needs of the sector and advocate for necessary changes. Emma will be presenting the Nationals and Liberals' alcohol and other drugs policies to the sector at an event in Melbourne in August. Among these policies are more AOD residential withdrawal and rehab beds, and a policy to create Australia's first gold-standard drug treatment model.

In her contribution on the Appropriation (2022-2023) Bill 2022 in Parli this week, Emma Kealy mentioned the following:

The alcohol and other drug sector has been cut by \$40 million, including a \$25 million fund which was utilised to train up quickly 100 additional equivalent full-time workers to provide AOD support. We know a lot of people turned to the bottle and turned to drug use over the pandemic because they simply could not cope with restrictions and lockdowns. They were self-medicating. These people desperately need additional AOD support. The government put money into this program, and then with weeks to go until the end of this financial year they were told, 'That's it. There's no more'. That is 100 EFT of AOD workers that have been cut, and it is simply not good enough.

PLANNING

23. Right to Farm

Benambra AEDC

That this conference calls on governments to ensure the protection of farm-land use for agriculture and not for commercial entertainment.

AMENDED – CARRIED

The State Parliamentary Team have noted this motion for discussion with the Liberal Party for our joint 2022 State Election platform.

24. Lead Battery Smelter

Morwell AEDC

That this conference notes the significant concerns of the Latrobe Valley community on the health impacts of a State Government endorsed Chinese- owned secondary lead smelter and calls on the Andrews Government to implement an independent and transparent Environmental Effects Statement on the project and to implement policy to ensure this does not happen to other Victorian communities.

CARRIED

Melina Bath continued her strong advocacy on the Latrobe Valley's air quality and the community's opposition to the Used Lead Acid Battery plant, highlighting how Labor handed CCP Belt and Road partner, Chunxing Corporation a licence to emit up to 54 kilograms of lead annually.

Melina Bath actively supported Hazelwood North residents fighting for greater transparency in state parliament and sponsored a parliamentary petition attracting 3,000 signatures. Through Melina Bath's advocacy, the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Health Impacts of Air Pollution recommended the Andrews Government conduct an independent Environmental Effects Statement (EES) into Chunxing Corporations Used Lead Acid Battery (ULAB) secondary smelter proposed for Latrobe Valley.

The Nationals demanded the Andrews Government accept the Inquiry recommendation and immediately commit to an independent EES on Chunxing Corporations' Used Lead Acid Battery facility. Despite the Inquiry recommendation, the Andrews Government refused to conduct an EES.

The state government released the project timeline in March 2022 against the communities wishes. Melina Bath continues to meet with concerned community members and demand full transparency on air quality in Latrobe Valley at any given moment through an expansion of the Latrobe Valley Information Network which monitors air quality so it includes lead.

PREVENTION OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

25. Community Based Assistance

Women's Conference

That this conference urgently requests the Andrews Government to fund local community-based assistance to provide family support, thereby helping to prevent family conflict leading to domestic violence.

AMENDED – CARRIED

The Nationals and Liberals have for many years called for and supported the establishment of community-based services to provide support to people affected by domestic violence, including lobbying for safety hubs such as the Orange Door to be delivered across the state, and for greater provisions of public housing allocations for victim-survivors of family violence. The Nationals and Liberals have continued to hold the Andrews Government to account in implementing the recommendations from the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence six years ago. As of January this year, some of the recommendations were more than two years overdue.

TRANSPORT

26. Bus and Rail Services

Women's Conference

That this conference calls on government to better align bus and rail services in rural and remote towns.

CARRIED

27. Dookie Rail

Shepparton AEDC

That this conference calls on the Victorian Labor Government to ensure the Dookie rail line is improved to allow again the use of trains as carriage for grain, goods and passengers.

AMENDED - CARRIED

ROADS AND ROAD SAFETY

28. Rail Freight

Lowan AEDC

That this conference calls on the Government to provide greater incentives and funding to enable more freight to move on rail rather than on road and reduce the use of road trains.

CARRIED

The State Parliamentary Team have been calling for the Labor Government to finish the Murray Basin Rail Project to take trucks off the road. In September 2021, they highlighted the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) report that shows the project is currently \$367.9M over budget and five years overdue. The Commonwealth has put up more than \$200M in extra funds and, when elected to government in Victoria, The Nationals will ensure that the project is assessed and moved forward. The Nationals will also ensure a project similar to the 'Country Roads & Bridges' fund is reinstated by a Liberals and Nationals State Government with Steph Ryan as the Minister for Public Transport and Roads.

Media releases can be found [here](#) and [here](#)

29. Speed Restrictions

Women's Conference, Lockington and District Branch

That this conference calls on the State Government to increase rural road funding in lieu of the practice of unplanned speed restrictions as a method of delaying maintenance and investigates Regional Roads Victoria's failure to remove signs from road works when completed.

CARRIED

Tim McCurdy has continued to raise this in Parliament with the Government, as well as working with Nationals MPs on a media campaign highlighting the condition of rural roads due to a lack of funding.

Noah sending Resources

30. Electric Vehicles

Euroa AEDC

That this conference supports the establishment of plans to provide a network of electric power outlets in regional Victoria to service the needs of electric vehicles.

CARRIED

31. Road usage charges and adult bike users

Indi FEDC

That this conference calls for an examination of the fairness of road usage charges across all road users with a special focus on adult bike users.

LOST

TREASURY AND TAXATION

32. Procurement

Melbourne AEDC/FEDC

That this conference calls on the Victorian Government to break up large regional projects, usually targeted at tier one contractors, to allow local regional small- and medium-sized firms to tender directly, rather than be a sub-contractor for the work.

CARRIED

In principle, the State Liberals and Nationals support reforms that will boost local businesses and their ability to complete local jobs. The State Parliamentary Team have also noted this specific motion for discussion with the Liberal Party for our joint 2022 State Election platform.

WATER

33. Murray Darling Basin

Murray Plains AEDC

That this conference strongly requests an immediate review of the Murray Darling Basin Authority policy that allows ever increasing massive discharges of precious Murray River water into the Southern Ocean.

CARRIED

FEDERAL

34. Environmental levy

Gippsland South AEDC

That this conference calls on the State Government to place a conservation levy on metropolitan councils to pay farmers for looking after the environment, including native animals such as wombats, ducks, and kangaroos.

AMENDED – CARRIED

In the lead up to the 2022 State Election, the State Parliamentary Team are actively considering reforms to Victoria's rates systems to ensure a fairer distribution of funding for regional councils.

35. Change and Suppression Practices Prohibition Bill

Gippsland FEDC, Melbourne AEDC/FEDC, Ovens Valley AEDC

That this conference condemns the Andrews Labor Government for passing the Change and Suppression Practices Prohibition Bill 2020, demands its rejection or repeal and further calls on the Federal Government to initiate an inquiry into its constitutional validity given its extraterritorial application affording jurisdiction beyond Victoria's borders.

WITHDRAWN

36. Doctor and Specialist Shortage in Regional Areas

Gippsland FEDC

That this conference takes urgent action regarding the critical shortage of practitioners in regional and rural communities, making patient care not equal to their city counterparts.

CARRIED

Nationals MPs have worked with the Federal Coalition to address doctor shortages and ongoing healthcare availability concerns with a particular focus on ambulance response times and shortages.

This has been done through local media, Parliamentary debate and in writing to the Minister for Emergency Services, the Minister for Ambulance Services and the Minister for Health.

National MPs have actively highlighted the impact of the health crisis and ambulance shortage across regional Victoria through local media and social media.

Tim Bull highlighted the death of a man on an ambulance stretcher waiting for care at a hospital in Gippsland East.

Danny O'Brien's most recent parliamentary speech on the health crisis can be found [here](#)

37. Water usage - FEDERAL

Indi FEDC

That this conference calls on The Nationals to amend the Water Act 2007 to better balance the needs of the environment, irrigated agriculture and river communities and further investigates protecting sustainable catchment run off for downstream benefits to agriculture, communities and the environment.

CARRIED

38. Telecommunication Providers - FEDERAL

Women's Conference

That this conference calls on the Federal Government to give all telecommunication providers access to localised mobile roaming communication infrastructure during emergencies to ensure community safety and implement recommendation 6.3 of the Bushfire Royal Commission.

AMENDED – CARRIED

39. Tax Concessions - FEDERAL

Ripon AEDC

That this conference calls on the Commonwealth Government to provide tax concessions to encourage more Australians to work in the seasonal agriculture labour market.

CARRIED

40. JobSeeker Rate

Lowan AEDC

That this conference calls on the Federal Government to peg the JobSeeker allowance rate at 50 per cent of the national minimum wage as a minimum mandatory benchmark.

WITHDRAWN

41. Closure of Bank Branches FEDERAL

Lowan AEDC

That this conference expresses its great concern regarding the closure of bank branches in small country towns, forcing people to travel great distances for banking services.

CARRIED

42. High Court of Australia

Gippsland FEDC

That this conference calls for the High Court of Australia Act 1980 to be changed so the High Court is prevented from changing or reversing decisions unless new compelling evidence is presented, or Parliament changes the relevant Act. In the event the High Court reverses or changes previous decisions then previous litigants much be given the opportunity to:

- i) Have their cases retired in the event it can prove that new compelling evidence or change of legislation would have resulted in the same outcome.
- ii) Utilise other remedies in order previous litigants that may be able to claim some form of remedy and recompense.

LOST

PARTY ADMINISTRATION

43. Upper House Pre-selections

Gippsland South AEDC

That this conference determines that The National Party Australia - Victoria's constitution be amended to ensure that where a pre-selection has been held for the Legislative Council, the number of votes cast by preselectors for a candidate should determine the order on the state election ticket, not the determination of the applicant approval committee.

CARRIED

44. Postal Voting

Shepparton AEDC

That this conference calls on The Nationals to support a change to the current voting system in State and Federal elections to be cast by postal votes as the case in local government elections.

LOST

45. Local Government Elections

Melbourne AEDC/FEDC

That this conference calls for The Nationals to support candidates for local council elections.

AMENDED – CARRIED

No council elections have occurred since the 2021 State Conference. However, conversations with local leaders and within the Party are underway - as are initiatives like the Isobel Project - to ensure support is given to good people stepping up for their communities.

46. Parliament and electoral staff

Melbourne AEDC/FEDC

That this conference calls for paid electoral officers and staff to be ineligible for party positions, other than those in branches.

LAPSED

47. Election of Women’s Executives

Women’s Conference

That this conference calls for the election of representatives to the Women’s Executive when required to be undertaken by way of a postal or online vote of female members from within the Region. The election must be held not less than 14 days prior to the party’s annual conference.

CARRIED

48. Membership Fees

Board of Management

That this conference resolves that membership fees for 2021/22 remain at, inclusive of GST:

- a. Standard Membership:
 - i. Individual/Dual: \$100; Direct Debit \$90
 - ii. Pensioner (Ind./Dual): \$50
- b. Young National (Ind./Dual): \$50; First Year \$10
- c. Gold Membership (Ind./Dual): \$500
- d. Platinum Membership (Ind./Dual): \$1,000
- e. MP Membership (Ind./Dual): \$3,000

CARRIED

49. Membership renewal dates & direct debits

Board of Management

That this conference determines that the Constitution and Rules be amended so as to permit a “rolling” annual membership renewal date, whereby membership fees for new members are to be due and payable on each twelve-month anniversary of joining/renewal rather than on a single fixed renewal date.

CARRIED

2020 MOTIONS FOR RATIFICATION

1. That this State Council determines that Rule 123 of the Constitution & Rules be amended on a provisional basis, subject to ratification at the next Annual State Conference, as to allow two delegates from each AEDC and FEDC to vote in Senate pre-selections.

CARRIED

2. That this State Council determines that, in the event that a Senate preselection is required before 21 February 2021, each consitutional FEDC shall convene a Special General Meeting to elect two delegates who shall have full voting rights at the Senate preselection. To be eligible to be elected as a FEDC Senate preselection delegate, a nominee must be a financial member of the Party and enrolled on the relevant Federal election roll.

CARRIED

3. That this State Council determines that Rule 4 of the Constitution & Rules be amended on a provision basis, subject to ratification at the next Annual State Conference, as to allow membership of the Young National Party to be extended from the age of 30 to 35.

CARRIED

URGENCY MOTIONS

1. **Long-term refugees – FEDERAL**

That State Conference seek and support the transition of long term refugees, working and living in rural areas, to permanent visas, with agreement to remain in the rural workforce.

CARRIED

2. **National Curriculum – FEDERAL**

That this conference condemns the recently released proposal by the Australia Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) to radically alter the

national curriculum, and opposes any attempts by State Governments to implement it.

CARRIED

3. New camping regulations

This Conference strongly rejects the proposed new camping regulations relating to the Victoria Crown Land River Reserves that are due to commence in September 2021.

CARRIED

The Nationals continued to push back and fight the changes to licenced river frontages in state parliament and through the media by highlighting issues such as waste management, water quality, bushfire risk, vulnerable species, biosecurity, public liability and the protection of stock.

The issued attracted a large amount of interest from the media. Melina Bath hosted news crews at Glenfalloch station in Licola on the Macalister River which is part of End Hill P/L with business owner Will Paul and General Manager Dane Martin to highlight the issues.

Highlighting the flaws in the public submission process, landholders were encouraged to reject the Andrews Government's plan to allow camping on licensed river frontages. A protest was held on the steps of parliament house with land holders from all Victoria attending. Leader of the Nationals and Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Peter Walsh and Melina Bath, Member for Eastern Victoria Region and Shadow Assistant Minister for Public Land Use addressed the rally.

Labor has scaled back its plans announcing only 27 pilot camping sites along licenced river frontages that are under assessment by DELWP.

The Nationals continue to seek the involvement of farmers, Traditional Owners and Landcare groups in the planning process and address farmers concerns over the lack of communication from DELWP on site assessments.

A media release can be found [here](#) and a news article [here](#)

4. Amendment to Change and Suppression Practices Prohibition Act 2020

That this Conference calls on an incoming Liberal - National Government to amend the Change and Suppression Practices Prohibition Act 2020 to:

- i. Support parental and family rights through an explicit exemption carve-out for direct parental and family assistance and support conduct provided to children (under 18) or family members with impaired capacity
- ii. In-line with the Australian Medical Association's recommendations

- a. Provide an explicit exemption carve-out amendment for health service providers / practitioners conduct which in their reasonable professional judgement, is clinically appropriate.
- b. Delete section 5 (3)(a) that unfairly targets psychiatry and psychotherapy health professionals
- iii. Scale back the new-found additional role and powers of the Victorian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (VHREOC) to its previously existing remit and powers under the Equal Opportunities Act 2010

CARRIED

With Michael O'Brien, the State Coalition committed to amend this act once elected to government to protect freedom of thought. This commitment still stands.

Further resources can be found [here](#)