



# Alan Tudge MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR ASTON



## News from your Federal MP

Spring 2011

**Three year old pre-school is at risk if federal policy does not change. See inside....**



*At Templeton Orchards Pre-school, Wantirna, with Vice President Lelania Currie and three year old kinder kids.*

## Protecting our local manufacturers

I am concerned that the carbon tax will hit Knox harder than most areas due to our large manufacturing base across **Bayswater, Scoresby, Knoxfield** and elsewhere.

The tax makes locally produced costs more expensive, but does not add cost to imported goods.

545 jobs will be lost from Knox, according to the Victorian Treasury.

Over the last few months, I have visited dozens of local businesses to better understand this. Manufacturers, like the family-owned VicPole in Bayswater, say that the added tax could impact the viability of their business, causing it to import rather than manufacture.

I have asked the Federal Treasurer directly in Parliament to consider local Knox businesses like VicPole before proceeding with this tax.

Real businesses, real jobs and the livelihoods of people that are at stake.



*Discussing the carbon tax at VicPole in Bayswater*

## What's Inside...

**10,000 call for Knox Headspace Centre**



**New Family Relationship Centre in Boronia**



# 10,000 call for Knox Headspace

Over 10,000 people have signed a petition expressing their support for better local youth mental health services, including a Headspace Centre in Knox. This is one of the biggest petitions in Knox's history.

I have tabled this in Parliament, sending a strong message to Canberra.

A Headspace Centre in Knox would assist thousands of young people in our community who are suffering from depression or anxiety. The petition is part of our ongoing campaign to reduce the stigma of youth depression and get better services locally.



Receiving petitions from Prena Diksha and Pauline Renzow who have worked tirelessly to support our local campaign



Federal Parliamentary Committee comes to Knox Community Health to discuss workforce issues

## Fight continues for three-year-old kinders

In my last newsletter, I mentioned my concern that the Federal Government's decision to mandate 15 hours per week for four-year-old kinder (up from 10 hours) will squeeze out three-year-old kinders. There will simply not be enough space or teachers. Local kinders, such as **Templeton Orchards** three-year-old program, will close if the rules are not relaxed, according to kinder leaders.

I held a Public Forum at **Orana Neighbourhood House** to discuss the issue. A number of actions have followed. I have:

- ✓ Raised the issue directly with the Minister, Peter Garrett;
- ✓ Moved a motion in Parliament (which was passed) calling for greater flexibility;
- ✓ Raised the issue in the media to maximise the pressure;
- ✓ Coordinated a survey of local kinders.

Hundreds of local children will miss out on three-year-old pre-school unless change is made. I will maintain the pressure.



With Diana Bridges, President of Liberty Avenue Three-Year-Old Kindergarten in Rowville

## New Family Relationship Centre in Boronia

Families will have additional support following the opening of a Relationships Australia Victoria centre in **Boronia**.

The centre provides a range of services to prevent family breakdown and support people through dispute resolution, family violence prevention, and other relationship issues. It will assist about 2,000 people each year. I had the pleasure of opening the centre.

Strong families raise strong children and build strong communities. To contact the **Boronia** centre on 9725 9964.

## Karoo Primary says, "Farewell Mr Harry"

Farewell and best wishes Mr Jim Harry, who recently retired after 18 years at Karoo Primary, 11 of those as Principal.

He was much loved by the school and broader community. In his office, he displayed a poster which captured his spirit: "Priorities: A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was...but the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child".

## Appropriate development for Knox

Along with many local residents, I am concerned about planned high-rise developments in places like **Boronia**, **Mountain Gate** and around **Stud Park**. People are anxious that we will lose the family nature of our suburbs.

While modest developments can be positive, I support those who are fighting to maintain the character of our suburbs. Due to pressure from many, the Council has compromised on its plans for **Boronia**. I would like to see commonsense prevail in **Mountain Gate** and **Stud Park** as well.

From the Federal perspective, I am fighting to ensure that our population growth does not run ahead of our infrastructure capacity. We are congested enough already. We should have the infrastructure in place first, then grow again.

## Preserving private health insurance

The Federal Government is again trying to means test the private health insurance rebate.

This is another broken election promise that will impact everyone.

Means testing the rebate will see people cancel or reduce their level of cover, which will put further pressure on the public hospital system.

In addition, the 84,000 people in **Knox** who are currently covered by private health insurance could see their premiums rise by more than 10%.

I will be arguing against this in Parliament. Email the Federal Health Minister if you wish to express your concern: [Nicola.Roxon.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:Nicola.Roxon.mp@aph.gov.au)



## Recognising extraordinary VCE success

I had the pleasure of recognising seven outstanding local residents who were recipients of Australian Student Prizes this year. This meant they achieved almost perfect VCE scores and graduated in the top 500 students in Australia. An incredible achievement! The award winners are:

- ✓ Kim-anh Do from **Scoresby**
- ✓ Jessica Hellier from **Bayswater**
- ✓ Brandon Khoo from **Wantirna**
- ✓ Sambhav Kothari from **Rowville**
- ✓ Sheran Vasanthakumar from **Wantirna**
- ✓ Alfred Yang from **Wantirna South**
- ✓ Yao Yao from **Wantirna South**



## Gambling your house away

An unemployed **Wantirna** man almost lost his and his mother's home when he was given \$80,000 in credit from Sportsbet.com.au and then blew it over a weekend. He was bankrupted and about to be evicted when he came to see me.

Like many, I was surprised and shocked that gambling companies were able to give credit to customers. It is not right. I have since discovered that most online gambling companies are licensed in the NT – one of the few jurisdictions which allows it.

I have set out to do two things:

- ✓ help save Henry's house; and,
- ✓ change the law so that cases like this cannot happen again.

We have succeeded in the first – Sportsbet have waived the debt. We are still working on the second but making progress.

# Out and About in Knox

- ✓ Convened a **Public Forum** in **Wantirna South** to discuss pre-school issues.
- ✓ Visited dozens of small **businesses across Knox** to understand their concerns better.
- ✓ Awarded "Local Sporting Champions" certificates to outstanding young athletes at a ceremony in **Wantirna South**.
- ✓ Presented flags, student awards or attended productions at **9 schools across Knox**.
- ✓ Received the debutantes at the **Wantirna College, Emmaus College** and **Knox School**, at their presentation balls.
- ✓ Spoke at the June and August **Knox Citizenship Ceremonies** representing the Australian Parliament.
- ✓ Met with the Community Choice for Pre-Schools Group to discuss local concerns in **Wantirna South**.
- ✓ Convened the July **Aston Community Forum** to discuss the needs of disadvantaged people in our community.
- ✓ Celebrated a turning of the sod for the commencement of construction of **Villa Maria** in **Wantirna**.
- ✓ Discussed local business issues with the **South East Business Connect** Group at **Mountain Gate**.
- ✓ Recognised incredible service to our community at the **Boronia** and **Scoresby CFA** Annual Dinners.
- ✓ Celebrated the Jubilee of the Ordination of Father Mackay at **St Jude's Parish** in **Scoresby**
- ✓ Supported the **Knox Italian Club** at the annual Bocce Competition in **Rowville**.



*Learning the trade at Janine Baird Uniforms, Scoresby Village*

- ✓ Presented awards and recognised achievement at **sporting club** presentation nights **across Knox**.
- ✓ Listened to the concerns of residents at public forums at **Wantirna Retirement Village**, Rowville's **Peppertree Hill Retirement Village**.
- ✓ Brought a Federal Parliamentary Committee inquiry to **Knox Community Health, Ferntree Gully**.
- ✓ Met with the Knox Chinese Elderly Senior Citizens in **Knoxfield** over a traditional lunch.
- ✓ Welcomed **Tony Abbott** to speak with shoppers and business owners at **Knox City**.
- ✓ Supported the Outer Eastern **Vietnam Vets** fundraising BBQ in **Studfield**, in support of Long Tan Day.
- ✓ Held Saturday morning **Mobile Offices** at shopping strips including **Wantirna Mall, Studfield Shops, Bayswater Shops, Mountain Gate, Wellington Village** and **Boronia**.
- ✓ Met with residents in the **Stamford Estate, Rowville**, over high-rise development concerns.
- ✓ Officially opened the new wing of the Arpad Hungarian Aged Care Facility in **Wantirna**.

*Congratulated Scoresby Primary School Lollypop lady, Robyn Mace after 26 years of service*



## Meet me at my Mobile Office

I am always available to listen to your concerns. You can meet me at my office, located in the same building as the Knox Police Station, opposite Knox City, or come along and meet me at my Mobile Office on Saturday mornings between 10:30 – 12:00am on:

- Saturday 5 November **Studfield** shops
- Saturday 12 November **Bayswater** (near Coles entrance)
- Saturday 19 November **Mountain Gate** shops (near Coles)
- Saturday 26 November **Boronia** (near Get Fresh)

