

CCHQ 2022

STRONG ECONOMY. STRONGER FUTURE.

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Dear Professor Slevin,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide the views of the Coalition on important issues facing your members. A response to your questions is attached.

The last two years have been tough for our country.

Despite the setbacks, Australia's economic recovery is leading the world.

Unemployment is at 4%, the equal lowest in 48 years. And the recent Budget included the biggest turnaround in our finances in over 70 years.

There's much more to be done. To build a stronger future, our plan will:

1. Deliver more jobs and working towards unemployment below 4%.
2. Deliver tax relief for workers and small businesses.
3. Invest in roads, rail, water infrastructure and renewable energy technology.
4. Make record investments in health and other essential services.
5. Invest in stronger defence, security and borders.

This election provides a clear choice, with real consequences for Australia.

The alternative at this election is Anthony Albanese and Labor. Labor would weaken our economy and put Australia's recovery at risk. Now is not the time to change course.

Thank you for communicating our response to your members.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Hirst
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INATIONALS
for Regional Australia

MORRISON GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIA

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HEALTH

What policies or investments in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health is your party proposing?

The Morrison Government will continue to provide funding to support the Indigenous health sector and support rural and remote Indigenous communities to respond to the threat of COVID-19. The Morrison Government has invested \$43.3 million in 2022-23 to continue key elements of the COVID-19 response to protect vulnerable rural, remote, and Indigenous communities; \$8.6 million over three years from 2022-23 to establish the National Closing the Gap Policy Partnership on Social and Emotional Wellbeing, to advise on policy and implementation of actions to address the Closing the Gap targets for social and emotional wellbeing, mental health and suicide prevention; and \$42.7 million over 2 years from 2022-23 to extend targeted regional initiatives to prevent suicide across Australia through more coordinated, but locally specific, efforts at the regional level.

What is your party's position on empowering Community Controlled Health Organisations in terms of both policy leadership and funding for service delivery sufficient to 'close the gaps'?

The Morrison Government is working closely with the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations (Coalition of Peaks), and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners, to deliver on the Commonwealth's Closing the Gap Implementation Plan.

The Morrison Government remains committed to working with Indigenous Australians to deliver an Indigenous Voice, and, for the Indigenous Voice to work, it must have a strong foundation from the ground up. That is why the Morrison Government is taking the next step and starting with the Local and Regional Voice, as set out in the Final Co-Design Report.

The extensive co-design process for the Indigenous Voice, that the Morrison Government has undertaken with Indigenous Australians, reflects our approach to working in partnership with Indigenous Australians. The Final Report makes it clear that Local and Regional Voices need to work with all levels of government to be effective.

The Morrison Government has committed \$31.8 million in this year's Budget to progress this process. The Government has appointed Professor Marcia Langton AO and Professor Tom Calma AO to lead the establishment group, and good progress is being made in discussions with State and Territory governments, and the Australian Local Government Association, about their participation in Local and Regional Voice arrangements.

The Local and Regional Voices will contribute to achieving the Closing the Gap outcomes by providing avenues for Indigenous voices to be heard and for local people to work in partnership with all governments to deliver practical on the ground solutions.

Labor has no clear plan to empower Indigenous Australians at the local and regional level and is not committed to the Indigenous Voice co-design process, which was the result of extensive consultations and engaged 9400 individuals and organisations across Australia. Australians deserve to know what Labor's plan is for the Indigenous Voice.

What is your party's commitment to implementing the Uluru Statement from The Heart?

On Constitutional Recognition, the Morrison Government has consistently said that we will go to a referendum once a consensus is reached and at a time it has the best chance of success.

The Morrison Government is committed to recognising Indigenous Australians in the Constitution and has backed this commitment with \$160 million for a referendum. Progressing change to the Constitution is a challenge and our Government is committed to getting it right.

INVEST IN PREVENTIVE HEALTH

Does your party support the target, stated in the [National Preventive Health Strategy](#), that investment of preventive health should make up 5% of total health expenditure by no later than the year 2030?

The Morrison Government's *National Preventive Health Strategy 2021–2030* aims to improve the health of all Australians through physical activity, better nutrition and reducing alcohol and other harmful drug use. The Morrison Government is providing an additional \$30.1 million for the Strategy through the 2022-23 Budget, focusing on increasing physical activity, nutrition and increasing screening post COVID-19.

Our Government will focus on preventive health post COVID-19 by encouraging Australians to catch up on regular health checks, diagnostic screening and other preventive health activities. This \$55.7 million investment includes: \$9.7 million for mammogram surge capacity at BreastScreen Australia; \$10.2 million for a triage nurse pilot to help improve colonoscopy access; \$20 million for cervical cancer screening, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities;

The Morrison Government will continue core activities under the five National Blood Borne Viruses and Sexually Transmissible Infections Strategies 2018–2022, aiming to eliminate HIV, viral hepatitis and STIs as public health threats by 2030.

Our Government will develop a whole-of-government National Nutrition Policy Framework to identify, prioritise, drive and monitor healthy eating in Australia and support a feasibility study examining unhealthy food and drink advertising to children. The \$10.6 million investment to establish a culturally and linguistically diverse Health Advisory Group will help all Australians understand the importance of preventive health and access to health services including investing more than \$830 million to deliver alcohol and other drug treatment services and programs over the next four years. This includes our National Ice Action Strategy and expanding the national Take Home Naloxone (THN) program through a \$19.6 million investment. Our Government's nationwide goal is to make this lifesaving, overdose-reversal medication available at no cost and without a prescription.

INVEST IN THE NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE

What commitments does your party make to urgently growing the nation's public health workforce to meet the challenges of chronic diseases of all kinds (not merely pandemic control)?

In the most recent Budget, the Morrison Government invested \$306.1 million to ensure we have a skilled and professional health and care workforce, to deliver Australia's Long Term National Health Plan.

The Morrison Government's investments in the 2022–23 Budget will improve the quality, distribution and planning of the health workforce to better meet the needs of the community

including in the key priority areas of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, aged care, mental health and suicide prevention, and rural and regional health.

These investments include the following:

- \$152.5 million to build training and education opportunities in rural areas, through a range of measures including increasing the number of medical Commonwealth Supported Places available at rural campuses and establishing two new University Departments of Rural Health.
- Growing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Care Workforce through 300 additional Puggy Hunter Memorial Scholarship Scheme students, which will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander undergraduate students in health-related disciplines with full time scholarships.
- Investing \$60.7 million to implement the 10 year Mental Health Workforce Strategy that will to build a sustainable, skilled, supported and equitably distributed workforce to deliver mental health care.
- Committed \$32.8 million to continuing to improve the workforce and delivery of quality care across the aged care, disability and veterans' care sectors, including support for Clinical Placements and Training including the Aged Care and Mental Health Sectors.
- Investing \$6.9 million for a staged rollout of the national Co-operative and Mutual Enterprises (CME) Support Program. This will increase the number of CMEs across the Australian social care sector, including the aged, mental health, disability and veterans' care sector.

The Morrison Government will invest more than \$1 billion to boost rural health and the rural health workforce. A re-elected Coalition Government will invest an additional \$146 million in new funding to inject more doctors and allied health professionals into regional and rural communities and improve treatment and care for patients.

These investments are part of our 10-year Stronger Rural Health Strategy which is already delivering more doctors and nurses into rural communities and training the next generation of country doctors.

The Morrison Government is building further on those key initiatives to target regional, rural and remote communities with immediate health workforce needs.

As part of this, a re-elected Morrison Government will invest \$35 million in new funding to significantly expand the successful Innovative Models of Collaborative Care program across rural and regional Australia from 1 January 2023. The program will attract, support, and retain rural health professionals to deliver care on the ground. The Innovative Models of Collaborative Care program will help build local workforce, create greater linkages with rural medical schools and provide greater team-based care for patients through GPs and allied health care professionals across their local communities.

A re-elected Morrison Government will invest \$15 million to expand the John Flynn Prevocational Doctor Program providing a total of more than 1,000 placements in rural Australia per year by 2026. This will train the next generation of junior doctors through placements in rural and regional general practice and prime them ready for the Australian General Practice Training Program.

A re-elected Morrison Government will invest \$9 million for additional training posts outside of community general practice for rural generalists and GP registrars, and Felloved GPs to undertake advanced skills training – like obstetrics, palliative care, paediatrics, and mental health – that are needed in their community.

A re-elected Morrison Government will invest \$87 million to provide additional workforce incentives to GP's and allied health professionals to provide further targeted support to rural generalists with additional education and skills to work in the regions, and to support the engagement of nurses, nurse practitioners and allied health professionals as part of local multidisciplinary care teams.

ESTABLISH A CENTRE FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Does your party support the establishment of a National Centre for Disease Control and Prevention?

The Morrison Government world-leading health response to COVID-19 resulted in one of the lowest fatality rates, with death rates in the US and UK around 10 times higher.

Australia has an existing highly effective and well-practised national governance and collaborative arrangements in place for health crises.

The Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) and its Standing Committees the Communicable Diseases Network Australia and the Public Health Laboratory Network have been crucial in the provision of evidence-based advice and strategic policy decisions that have guided the Australian response. These networks, among several others, are providing technical advice on the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Australian context, to inform response activities.

These existing and well understood structures have contributed to some of the best results in the developed world, in terms of vaccination levels and loss of life.

PROTECT AGAINST UNHEALTHY PRODUCTS

What policies does your party have to strengthen regulatory protections against the marketing of unhealthy products, especially children?

On 4 March 2022, the Morrison Government launched Australia's first National Obesity Strategy, an ambitious 10-year framework for action to prevent and reduce overweight and obesity in Australia. The strategy has two ambitious goals—to halt the rise and reverse the trend in the prevalence of obesity in adults and to reduce overweight and obesity in children and adolescents by at least five per cent by 2030.

Consistent with the Morrison Government's National Preventive Health Strategy 2021-2030, no single action will be enough to prevent and reduce obesity, instead, a systems-based approach that tackles the environmental influences and empowers individuals will be critical.

The Morrison Government is working with industry to increase the uptake of the front-of-pack Health Star Rating system, which 23% of Australian consumers report helps them choose healthier packaged and processed food and drinks.

Consistent with these supply-side measures, the National Obesity Strategy aims to reduce exposure of consumers to unhealthy food and drink marketing, promotion, and sponsorship especially for children. For example, the Strategy aims to reduce unhealthy food and drink advertising, branding and sponsorship in places visited by large numbers of people, especially children (like vending machines, supermarket checkouts and aisles, entertainment, and sporting venues).

These measures will reinforce industry self-regulation under the Australian Association of National Advertisers (AANA) Food & Beverages Advertising Code, which was re-launched in November 2021 with a range of new measures to respond to evolving community expectations, especially around marketing to children.

Does your party support making taxation of alcohol products equal across all alcohol products by alcohol volume?

The Morrison Government has committed to a 'Lower Tax Guarantee' as well as providing an iron clad guarantee that the Government will deliver the planned tax cuts and provide Australian workers with \$100 billion in tax relief over the next four years. The guarantee covers no new taxes on Australian workers, retirees, and small businesses.

Incremental changes to Australia's alcohol taxation regime over successive governments has led to a complex volumetric taxation system with different excise rates for beer, spirits, and ready-to-drink beverages. Current industry proposals continue to pull in different directions and, if all implemented, would add to complexity, and entrench differences in the taxation of different alcoholic products.

Post-election, the Morrison Government is committed to continuing to work with industry with a view to reduce complexity.

Will you support a levy on sugar-sweetened products?

The Morrison Government will not impose a tax on sugar-sweetened products. A strategy which involves educating Australians as well as appropriately regulating sugar-sweetened products is the preferred approach to ensure the responsible consumption of these products.

CLIMATE AND HEALTH

What commitments and targets does your party commit to in regard to reducing pollution, climate emissions and slowing climate change?

What commitments does your party have to bring about a switch in energy technologies away from fossil-fuel powered systems and towards renewable energy?

The Morrison Government is committed to driving down emissions while protecting our economy and jobs. We are one of a handful of countries to have released a [detailed economy-wide long-term plan](#) which sets out how we will achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

Having a target is one thing, but having a detailed plan, backed by \$22 billion of Government investment (leveraging at least \$88 billion in total public and private investment) in low emissions technologies, including renewable energy, is how Australia is making a significant contribution in the global fight against climate change.

Our Government has been getting on with the job and our emissions are now down 20%. Between 2005 and 2019 (the last year for which there is comparable data), Australia reduced its emissions faster than other similar countries including Japan, Canada, New Zealand and the United States. We are on track to beat our 2030 target by up to 9% and Australia is forecast to achieve a similar or greater reduction in emissions per capita by 2030 than other major developed economies including Canada, the European Union, France, Germany, Japan, New Zealand and the United States. Since 2017, there has been more than \$40 billion of investment in renewable energy by the Coalition Government, industry and the community. Our Government has also supported more than 27,000 clean energy, emissions reduction and energy efficiency projects right across the country. Last year, the share of renewable energy across our energy system was more than 29%. Under the previous Labor government, the share of renewables in the grid fell to just 7.5%. The Morrison Government's approach to reducing emissions is by investing in technology and not through carbon taxes. This has been very successful, and Australia's emissions are 130 Mt lower today than where

Labor's forecasts said they would be with a carbon tax (2012 projections). Emissions are also lower today than at any time under the previous Labor government.

A re-elected Morrison Government will continue to build on the achievements made in reducing emissions. There is \$22 billion committed to fund practical climate action across a range of areas including community and commercial renewable energy projects, batteries and energy storage, new hydrogen hubs, electric vehicle charging infrastructure and seed funding to support Australian innovators developing the low emissions energy solutions of the future.

HEALTHY DEMOCRACY AND PUBLIC POLICY MAKING

Will your party commit to strong regulation of the activities of lobbyists in meeting with ministers and government officials?

The Australian people expect that Government will act with integrity and in the best interests of the people it serves. Serving the Australian people as Ministers and Assistant Ministers is an honour and comes with expectations to act at all times to the highest possible standards of probity.

All Ministers and Assistant Ministers are expected to conduct themselves in line with standards established in the [Statement of Ministerial Standards](#) in order to maintain the trust of the Australian people.

Coalition Government Ministers are expected to ensure that dealings with lobbyists are conducted consistently with the Lobbying Code of Conduct, so that they do not give rise to a conflict between public duty and private interest.

All our Ministers are expected to ensure that lobbyists with whom they have dealings are properly registered, and they must report any instance of non-compliance with the requirements.

Our Ministers undertake that for an eighteen-month period after ceasing to be a Minister, they will not lobby, advocate or have business meetings with members of the government, parliament, public service or defence force on any matters on which they have had official dealings as Minister in their last eighteen months of office.

All parliamentarians are required to disclose private interests to the parliament. Given the additional responsibilities of Ministers and Assistant Ministers, the Prime Minister expects them to provide him with additional information about their private interests to ensure there are no conflicts with their roles as ministers.

Does your party support banning of political donations from unhealthy industry sectors, such as tobacco, alcohol, sugar, gambling, and fossil fuels?

Australia's political parties are subject to a rigorous funding and financial disclosure regime under Part XX of the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918, which has been in place under successive governments.

In recent years, the Coalition Government has strengthened this regime by banning foreign donations and better regulating third party campaigners.

The Liberal Party fully complies with the funding and disclosure regime.

Conclusion

A re-elected Coalition Government will continue to work with the Public Health Association of Australia to build on these initiatives and further information on our Plan to Strengthen Australia's

World Class Healthcare system is available via <https://www.liberal.org.au/strengthening-australias-world-class-health-system>