



13 May 2022

Adrienne Picone
CEO
Tasmanian Council of Social Service Inc
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Hobart, Tasmania 7000

By email: comms@tascoss.org.au

Dear Ms Picone

Thank you for contacting Tasmanian Candidates, and for giving us the opportunity to set out how the priorities of an Albanese Labor government would align with the mission of your organisation. I am responding on behalf of Tasmanian Federal Labor and detail to you our plan for a better future.

I have provided responses below that relate to the policy areas you listed as having specific interest to your members, but I also wanted to make sure you and your members are aware of the steps an Albanese Labor government would take to strengthen Australia's community sector and not-for-profits.

During the pandemic, community sector workers delivered meals to those out of work, cared for the elderly, found shelter for the homeless, supported women and children fleeing violence and organised volunteers. Whatever the challenges we face, the community sector has been there for all Australians. Government needs to be there for the community sector.

An Albanese Labor Government will help to boost the resources available to our charities and we will work with the sector so that Australian charities can evolve and expand their impact.

The non-profit sector accounts for eight per cent of GDP and employs around 1.3 million Australians. Even a small increase in the impact of the sector will have massive benefits across society, but little work has been done to help charities evolve and improve their impact.

Labor will increase capacity in the charity sector to help charities and non-profits do more of their vital work increasing participation and trust in society and strengthening community networks. We will do this by:

- Convening a Non-profit Sector Expert Reference Panel to draw up a blueprint that will set out how Australia's charities can reach their potential.
- Creating an ongoing working group to guide the implementation of that plan, and to cultivate the sector's role as experienced community builders and responders to isolation and social disconnection.
- Encouraging an efficient, informed and independent sector by modernising fundraising regimes, and protecting advocacy.
- Working with charities and donors to double philanthropic giving by 2030.

We will also improve job security and long-term planning in the sector by prioritising funding for organisations that provide secure work and good conditions, making sure grants reflect the real cost of delivering quality services to end the practice of competing on wages, and by moving towards longer contracts that provide better job security for workers and let organisations plan for more lasting impact.

Thank you again for your work supporting vulnerable Australians, engaging volunteers and advocating for a fairer Australia.

Yours sincerely



Carol Brown
Labor Senator for Tasmania
Shadow Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Tourism
Shadow Assistant Minister for Tasmania

Labor's policies for a better future

The 2022 election is an opportunity for Australia to build back as a stronger country. The past decade has been a missed opportunity to build a fairer society that values social services and providers. An Albanese Labor Government will work towards a better future where no one is held back, and no one is left behind.

Our plans will put Australia on the path to genuinely inclusive full employment, create more secure work, deliver more and safer social housing, provide for better aged care, and make childcare cheaper. We will give more women, people with disability, youth, and First Nations Australians opportunities to participate fully in society and the economy.

Income support

Too many Australians are being left behind coming out of the pandemic.

We can't undo a decade of Liberal Government damage in one go. Especially given they doubled the debt, even before the pandemic, and have wasted billions of dollars.

But we can promise that every budget of an Albanese Labor Government will make helping those in need a priority. We will balance payment rates against other critical investments in the supports people rely on like social housing, affordable childcare, Medicare, schools and fee-free TAFE.

Housing and Homelessness

We want every Australian to know the security of having a roof over their head.

An Albanese Labor Government will build more social housing, upgrade existing housing, and make sure that the promise of home ownership is extended to all Australians.

Housing Australia Future Fund and the National Housing and Homelessness Plan

Labor will create the \$10 billion Housing Australia Future Fund. Each year investment returns from the Housing Australia Future Fund will be transferred to the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation (NHFIC) to pay for social and affordable housing projects.

Over the first 5 years the investment returns will build around:30,000 social housing properties and affordable homes, including specific allocations to women and children fleeing domestic and family violence and older women on low incomes at risk of homelessness.

A portion of the investment returns will fund acute housing needs on an ongoing basis, helping a range of Australians who are most at risk of homelessness.

We've also committed to develop and implement a National Housing and Homelessness Plan. We would work closely with the States and Territories,

local government, and other key stakeholders to put in place the best solutions to alleviate the severe housing crisis.

Help to buy

We want home ownership to be a possibility for more Australians, but with the cost of living going up faster than people's pay, we understand how hard it has become for many Australians to save a big enough deposit to buy a home.

An Albanese Labor Government will cut the cost of buying a home by up to 40 per cent for 10,000 Australians per year. Our Help to Buy program will help Australians buy a home with a smaller deposit, a smaller mortgage and smaller mortgage repayments.

Cheaper Cleaner Power

For a decade, the Liberals' mismanagement of energy policy has been a threat to our climate and our economy.

Under Labor, Australian families and businesses will reap the reward of our Powering Australia plan which will create jobs, cut power bills and reduce emissions by boosting renewable energy.

- Our plan will create 604,000 jobs, with 5 out of 6 new jobs to be created in the regions.
- It will spur \$76 billion of investment.
- It will cut power bills for families and businesses by \$275 a year for homes by 2025, compared to today.

Alongside the economic benefits, our plan will reduce Australia's emissions by 43% by 2030 – which will become Australia's target under the Paris Agreement, keeping us on track for net zero by 2050.

At a local level, we will be rolling out solar banks and community batteries to help households get affordable clean energy.

Labor will restore the Climate Change Authority to its rightful role and demonstrate Commonwealth leadership by reducing the Australian Public Service's own emissions to net zero by 2030.

Increasing digital skills and affordability

We are conscious of the digital divide created by cost, access and skill levels, and the inequalities this creates as more and more services and opportunities require access to digital platforms and confidence using them. The advocacy TasCOSS has been leading, along with your partners in the 'digital inclusion alliance', is welcome and necessary.

We know that in the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, the dramatically increased reliance on online infrastructure highlighted some shortfalls in the skills and resources of the community sector and their clients. And while many organisations have found new opportunities for online engagement and connection, the

accelerated digital shift showed up an imbalance in community access, and saw organisations that didn't have the resources to adapt quickly being left behind.

Labor has committed to create a Not-for-Profit Sector Expert Reference Panel, with the task of drawing up a blueprint to strengthen our charities and not for profits. Increasing digital inclusion, access and skills, both in the community and the community sector workforce, could provide a meaningful boost to the productivity of the sector and to the wellbeing of vulnerable Australians. This is a challenge we anticipate will be considered closely in that group's work.

Health

All Australians deserve access to universal, prompt, and world class medical care, but since the Liberals have been in Government, it is harder and costs more to see a doctor and get routine health care.

Urgent Care Clinics

Labor will deliver at least 50 [Medicare Urgent Care Clinics](#), to take pressure off our emergency departments.

Medicare Urgent Care Clinics will be based in existing GP clinics and Community Health Centres and provide bulk billed services delivered by doctors and nurses – in every state and territory.

Labor will also:

- change the rules to allow regional and outer metro communities to recruit more doctors of their choosing – both locals and overseas trained GPs.
- expand the newborn screening program, increasing the number of screened conditions from around 25 to 80.
- improve pandemic preparedness and response by establishing an Australian Centre for Disease Control.

Labor built Medicare. Australians know they can trust us to keep Medicare safe and strong, and to put the health of our people first.

Cutting the cost of medications

Costs of living are soaring with many Australians cutting back on essentials in order to make ends meet. They are being forced to choose between filling prescriptions for potentially life-saving medicines, and providing food and shelter for their families.

Labor has committed to cut the cost of medications by reducing the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) co-payment from the current maximum of \$42.50 per script, to a maximum of \$30 per script.

Labor's plan will keep the costs of medications down, leaving more in the household budget for other important expenses.