



Martin with Ron Horwood at Austin Hospital

Better Health and Hospital Services

While a billion dollars was ripped out of the health system when Tony Abbott was Minister, Julia Gillard and Federal Labor are committed to better health and hospital services – which will be funded nationally and run locally.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- ✓ **Increased hospital funding** by 50%.
- ✓ Around 23 new **GP Super Clinics** will be built and up to 425 existing GP clinics will be expanded to provide patients with more services in a single location.
- ✓ **More doctors** – as part of the largest single investment in the health workforce, we have doubled the number of GP training places to 1200 a year by 2014.
- ✓ **More Nurses:** funding over 1,000 new training places for nurses every year.
- ✓ Funding around 4,600 nurses working in GP practices.
- ✓ **More beds** - a record investment to build 1,300 new sub-acute hospital beds.
- ✓ **Record numbers of Australians getting their elective surgery on time:** more than 76,000 elective surgery procedures have been delivered in the last two years, and over 125 hospitals have received new elective surgery equipment and operating theatres.
- ✓ Upgrades to more than 37 **emergency departments** in public hospitals.

- ✓ Rolling out a four hour cap on **emergency department waiting times**.
- ✓ More than 850,000 dental check-ups provided under the **Medicare Teen Dental Plan**.
- ✓ Increased **aged care** places by more than 10,000, including 838 new transition care places to help more than 6,200 older Australians leave hospital sooner each year.
- ✓ Delivering support for an extra 2,500 aged care places.
- ✓ Introduced a **health check-up for every 4 year old** to make sure they are fit, healthy and ready to learn when school starts.
- ✓ **Cut Binge Drinking** - closed the tax loophole that saw alcopop sales soar and implementing a \$103 million binge drinking strategy. This has seen alcopops consumption fall by 30 per cent.
- ✓ 44 **McGrath Foundation specialist breast cancer nurses** employed and trained as part of our National Cancer Plan.
- ✓ Rolling out **preventative health** programs in schools, workplaces and communities across the country.
- ✓ Setting tough new **uniform national hospital standards**.
- ✓ Providing 20,000 extra young people a year with access to mental health services.
- ✓ Introducing personally controlled electronic health records.

PREPARING AUSTRALIA FOR AN ENERGY EFFICIENT AND LOW CARBON ECONOMY

A Gillard Labor Government will:

- Invest \$1 billion over the next decade in our electricity networks to connect Australia's rich renewable resources to Australian homes and businesses.
- Through the Australian Centre for Renewable Energy, we will invest \$100 million in a new Renewable Energy Venture Capital Fund to assist companies to obtain access to capital that will get their renewable projects off the ground.
- Subject all new coal-fired power stations to tough emissions standards and make them ready for Carbon Capture and Storage.
- Provide generous tax breaks for eligible businesses that improve the energy efficiency of the commercial buildings they own.
- Provide eligible motorists with old, higher-emission, less fuel-efficient vehicles with a \$2,000 Cleaner Car Rebate when they purchase a new, lower-emission, fuel-efficient vehicle.
- Appoint a 150-strong Citizens' Assembly to to examine the evidence on climate change, the case for action and a market based approach to reducing pollution.
- A Gillard Labor Government will build community support for action on climate change through a 12 month process that directly involves this representative group of ordinary Australians.
- Establish a Climate Change Commission to explain the science of climate change and report on the progress of international action.

These processes are part of Federal Labor's commitment to build the deep and lasting consensus required to ensure action on climate change and move forward towards a competitive, low carbon Australian economy. They are in addition to Federal Labor's existing \$10 billion commitment to energy efficiency, renewables and other clean energy, including through the \$1.5 billion Solar Flagships program.

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You can register by visiting <http://australia.gov.au/service/do-not-call-register-service-directory>. Or contact my office on 9416 8690 to request a form.

From the time you register your number, it may take up to 30 days to take effect.

News in the Resources, Energy and Tourism Portfolio:

There have been big announcements over the last two months across all three areas of my Resources, Energy and Tourism portfolio.

We have made new appointments to the board of Tourism Australia, which has also launched the next phase of its global tourism campaign, There's Nothing Like Australia.

This includes an impressive website (www.nothinglikeaustralia.com) showcasing over 30,000 images and stories from everyday Australians about well-known tourist destinations and hidden gems around the country.

Our resource taxation reforms will deliver an important boost for business with a cut in the company tax rate from 30 to 29 per cent. Small businesses will also benefit from an immediate write-off of assets worth up to \$5,000.

On the energy front we saw an exciting breakthrough with the first steam generated from a geothermal project in South Australia. This project involves harnessing the natural heat buried beneath our feet and it marks progress in our quest to harness new, cleaner, renewable sources of energy. We all know how dependent we are on reliable and affordable electricity. Breakthroughs like these will help us guarantee supply in the future.



Ferguson Report August 2010

"Together, let's move Australia forward"

Federal Labor continues to deliver on important reforms for taxation, superannuation, education and health that will substantially improve the lives of everyday Australians. We are working hard to relieve the cost of living pressures in communities across the country.

On 1 July we delivered our latest round of tax cuts. Taken together the three rounds of tax cuts we have delivered will mean an extra \$750 a year in the pocket of someone earning \$20,000 a year, an extra \$1,750 a year for someone earning \$50,000 a year and an extra \$1,850 a year for someone earning \$90,000 a year.

On 2 July the Government announced the principles for resource taxation reform that will deliver tangible benefits to communities right across Australia, including for many residents here in the electorate of Batman. In particular, they will provide \$830 million in superannuation concessions for low-income earners.

This will come on top of the support we have already provided through pension reforms, including an increase in the pension rate of around \$100 a fortnight for single pensioners, \$74 a fortnight for couple pensioners which came into effect on 1 July 2010, and a \$600 Carer Supplement for more than 500,000 carers across Australia.

We have extended the 50 per cent Education Tax Refund to include school uniforms and I encourage all eligible parents to claim any eligible education expenses – up to \$390 per primary school child and \$779 per secondary school child.

The Government has secured agreement for tough new national standards for waiting times in emergency departments. These standards will ensure that when you visit an emergency department you will be seen and treated within four hours. This means more doctors, nurses and support staff in our hospitals.

This builds on the work we have already done to provide 1,300 new sub-acute beds in hospitals across the country, a 50 per cent increase in hospital funding and doubling the number of GP training places.

The Prime Minister has also announced more support for our school children through the National Trade Cadetships program. This will provide an important pathway into the trades and a real career choice for our young people.

And importantly we are on track to return the Budget to surplus by 2013, three years ahead of time. The recent G20 summit highlighted just how well placed Australia is compared to the rest of the world. Our unemployment rate is half that of the US and Euro area.

Federal Labor will keep Australia moving forward. It will continue to improve the services you need most delivering real benefits to Australian families.

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2 Launch of Victorian School of Languages Refurbishment of Print Room

On 20 July Martin launched the Victorian School of Languages' newly refurbished print room. Under the Australian Government's National School Pride Grant, the VSL School received \$200,000 funding towards this.

More aged care workers for Batman

\$87,180 funding will go to train eighteen aged care workers in the Batman Electorate. The funding is part of the Government's \$19.2 million investment in improving and upgrading the skills of more than 4,000 aged care workers nationally under the Better Skills for Better Care and Community Aged Care Workforce Programs.



Martin with Brad Edwards at NMIT.

National Trade Cadetships Welcomed in Batman

The Labor Government's announcement of a new National Trade Cadetship program will provide \$3.1 million over two years to establish the Cadetships, which will be delivered as part of the National Curriculum.

Trade Cadets would be the electricians, carpenters and tradies of tomorrow. The Cadetships will be open to students from Year 9 to 12 and will help to ensure they have the skills and experience to be job-ready and start a trade.



Launch of Victorian School of Languages Refurbishment of Print Room

103,744 New Volunteer Grants in Batman
27 local organisations will receive \$103,744 funding to support their volunteers and share \$21m in volunteer grants delivered across the country by the Labor Government.

These local organisations will receive grants of between \$1000 and \$5000 to cover the cost of petrol and purchase much-needed equipment such as computers, barbecues, air conditioners, refrigerators and help meet the costs of training their volunteers and completing police and background checks.



Martin presenting certificates to volunteers.



Together, let's move Australia forward

Martin Ferguson and Labor snapshots to move Australia forward

1 Increasing hospital funding by 50%



5 Funding 3,000 new nurses & 1,300 GPs over the next 3 years



2 Record investment in renewable energy like solar and wind



6 Building a National Broadband Network



3 Delivering Trades Training Centres for high schools



7 Putting computers in schools



4 Getting the budget back to surplus by 2013



8 Abolished WorkChoices and protecting rights at work



For more details of the Labor Government's plans go to alp.org.au

4 \$3 million for the Reservoir Library Redevelopment

Martin Ferguson announced on 27 July 2010 that the Gillard Labor Government will provide \$3 million for the Reservoir Library redevelopment.

The new Reservoir Library will include:

- A new, fully outfitted community library building;
- An underground car park; and
- Landscaping and signage.

This fantastic new development will offer resources and services to all members of the community, providing key support to locals, supporting youth learning literacy, and promoting social inclusion.

The Reservoir Library redevelopment is key to Federal Labor's plans to build stronger communities.

This funding will build on Federal Labor's record investment in local infrastructure, such as the \$305,000 provided for the Neighbourhood Park Refurbishment or the \$4,900,000 to refurbish the Lancaster Gate Community Centre.



In brief

National Solar Schools Program

Local schools will play an important role in the fight to cut Australia's carbon emissions and tackle climate change.

Under the Gillard Labor Government's National Solar Schools Program, which re-opened on the 15th of July 2010, grants of up to \$50,000 (\$100,000 for multi-campus schools) will be awarded to eligible primary and secondary schools to install solar and other renewable power systems. The grants will also be available to eligible schools for the installation of rainwater tanks and a range of other energy efficiency measures. For more information please visit www.climatechange.gov.au or call the National Solar Schools Program hotline on 1800 703 831.

MyHospitals website

For the first time all Australians will soon be able to view important data about their public hospitals thanks to a new website being developed as part of the Government's ambitious health reform agenda.

The MyHospitals website will provide clear, comparable and user-friendly information about all Australian public hospitals in all states and territories, except Western Australia.

Australia's first Paid Parental Leave scheme

From 1 January 2011, eligible families will have access to Australia's first Paid Parental Leave scheme. Families who have a baby on or after 1 January next year will receive up to 18 weeks parental leave pay, at the National Minimum Wage (currently \$570 per week before tax).

Eligibility requirements:

To be eligible for paid parental leave, a person will need to:

- Be the mother of a new born child or the initial primary carer of a recently adopted child.
- Have met the paid parental leave work test before the birth or adoption.
- Have an individual income of \$150,000 a year or less in the previous financial year.
- Be living in Australia and meet the residence requirements.

A person will meet the work test if they:

- Have worked continuously for at least 10 of the 13 months prior to the birth or adoption of the child.
- Have worked for at least 330 hours in the 10 month period (around one day a week).

Cutting Red Tape for Doctors a further part of Health Reform

GPs will be able to spend more time with their patients and less time on red tape through changes to Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) prescriptions recently announced. The Gillard Labor Government will expand the criteria for streamlining 'Authority required' medicines, to include medicines used to treat short-term conditions, where patient safety will not be put at risk. This will mean that, when prescribing one of these PBS medicines, doctors and other prescribers will no longer have to obtain telephone or written approval from Medicare Australia before prescribing particular PBS medicines.