

**WORKING
TOGETHER
FOR
OUR
COMMUNITIES
NGA20**

**Motions & Ministerial
Responses**



AUSTRALIAN
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
ASSOCIATION

2020 Motions

Note: As the 2020 National General Assembly was not held due to the Covid-19 Board pandemic the ALGA Board meet to consider all motions and where appropriate forward them to the relevant Minister or take a different action as detailed below.

1 Waverley Council NSW

Councils call on the State and Commonwealth Governments to provide effective support to Councils dealing with high visitation impacts on iconic Australian destinations by exploring additional funding support and/or revenue raising initiatives that can be used to help meet the costs of servicing visitation and improving the sustainability of these areas.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, Minister for Tourism, and the Hon Mark Coulton MP, Minister for Local Government.

2 City of Onkaparinga SA

That Councils call for the mandating of national packaging recyclability and recycling targets for producers and packaging manufacturers, noting the additional pressures councils and the recycling sector will face when the proposed bans on recycling exports commence.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer the Motion to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment.

3 Griffith City Council NSW

- (a) That the Federal Government give consideration to the establishment of a permanent fund directed at the maintenance of the security of the irrigation sector in times of drought, or the investment into maintaining and improving the infrastructure supporting the industries and populations which rely on the Murray Darling Basin.
- (b) That the Federal Government undertakes a comprehensive evaluation of future infrastructure investment requirements which secure both the environmental and productive requirements of the Murray Darling Basin for decades to come.
- (c) A sovereign Wealth Fund be established and maintained for addressing these matters.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer the motion to the Hon Keith Pitt MP, Minister for Resources, Water and Northern Australia (as Minister responsible for the Murray Darling Basin).

4 Newcastle City Council NSW

That Councils:

- 1. Recognise that our national recycling industry is currently under severe strain from the China National Sword policy and a growing priority to increase Australia's recycling rate;
- 2. Note that Infrastructure Australia recently listed national waste and recycling management as one of five national high priority initiatives; and
- 3. Call on the Federal Government to develop a national program to assist Councils to combat the challenges Local Government is currently experiencing with recycling management, waste avoidance and resource recovery.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP Minister for the Environment.

5 Newcastle City Council NSW

That Councils:

1. Note that coastal erosion continues to worsen throughout Australia and that following the severe and ongoing coastal erosion occurring at Stockton in the City of Newcastle (CN) Local Government Area, the NSW and Commonwealth Governments recently declared a Natural Disaster at Stockton Beach;
2. Note that the NSW Government has committed \$83.6 million through the Coastal and Estuary Grants Program to provide technical and financial support to local government to help manage the coastal zone, while the Federal Commonwealth Government does not have an existing program of funding available to address coastal erosion;
3. Note that Infrastructure Australia's 2020 Infrastructure Priority List has identified coastal inundation as a High Priority Initiative in response to the issue of rising sea levels over the next 15 years; and
4. Call on the Federal Commonwealth Government to implement a national, cross-jurisdictional approach to coastal erosion.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment.

6 Newcastle City Council NSW

That Councils:

1. Note that in September 2018, Everymind launched the National Communications Charter: A unified approach to mental health and suicide prevention (The Charter), aimed at assisting governments, organisations, community groups and individuals to play a role in reducing stigma around mental illness and suicide, while also promoting help-seeking behaviour through its guiding principles and messages;
2. Commend Everymind for developing this important tool, and their incredible work to unite organisations across Australia to promote communicating in ways that promote improving our mental health awareness and suicide prevention;
3. Encourage all Councils to sign the National Communications Charter: A unified approach to mental health and suicide prevention; and to commit to reducing stigmatising language and promoting help-seeking and help-offering behaviour in communications material; and
4. Encourage Councils across the nation to take a leadership role.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to State and Territory Associations for their consideration and for ALGA to support through ALGA News.

7 Newcastle City Council NSW

That Councils:

1. Note that in February 2019, City of Newcastle (CN) endorsed the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) Cities Appeal campaign which is aimed at building support and awareness for the Treaty, with 26 local Councils also endorsing this campaign to date;
2. Encourage all local Councils to endorse the ICAN Cities Appeal Campaign; and
3. Write to the Prime Minister and Opposition Leader, urging the Federal Government to sign the 2017 United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to write to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Marisa Payne on point 3 only.

8 Randwick City Council NSW

Councils call on the Australian Government to:

- a. Recognise the intrinsic value of arts and culture to the Australian community;
- b. Recognise the significant contribution of local government to arts and culture in our communities;
- c. Work with local government to enhance, support and fund arts and culture at a local level; and
- d. Develop federal funding mechanisms to match or exceed spending on the arts by local government authorities.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, Minister for the Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts.

9 Bega Valley Shire Council NSW

Councils call on the Federal Government to support and fund relevant Indigenous organisations to work with land management agencies to develop and increase hazard reduction 'cool burns'.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management.

10 Bega Valley Shire Council NSW

Councils request the Federal Government to continue funding of the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management.

11 Bega Valley Shire Council NSW

That Councils call on the Federal Government to take immediate action to hasten financial relief promised to bushfire effected businesses and individuals.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management.

12 Bega Valley Shire Council NSW

That Councils urge the Federal Government to include in the National Waste Policy a timeline to phase out and ban single use plastic bags.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment.

13 Yarra City VIC

Councils call for the development of state and national standards to achieve zero carbon emission buildings.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Karen Andrews MP, Minister for Industry, Science and Technology (the Minister responsible for building).

14 Glen Innes Severn Council NSW

That Glen Innes Severn Council lobbies ALGA to advocate for the increase of the Financial Assistance Grants (FAG) - General Purpose and Local Roads components from the current percentage of 0.55% of Federal Income Taxation collections, to 0.75% of Federal Income Taxation collections.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to include it in the Financial Assistance Grants related letter to the Minister for Local Government, the Hon Mark Coulton MP.

15 City of Darwin NT

That Councils call on the Commonwealth Government to increase the Zone Tax Offset to align with inflation growth since its last review and commit to ongoing indexation in line with CPI to support those living in regional Australia and incentivise people to move to regional Australia to reduce the population pressures in Australia's major cities.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Treasurer the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP.

16 Tenterfield Shire Council NSW

That ALGA supports Regional Development Australia Committees (RDAs) in lobbying the NSW State Government and others to develop a funded business case for measures to increase migration from metropolitan and overseas locations to regional communities, where latent infrastructure capacities,

employment opportunities, quality of life and reduced costs of living remain undervalued in target markets.

The ALGA Board agreed noted the motion and agreed to refer the motion to LGNSW for their consideration as this is a state related matter.

17 East Arnhem Regional Council NT

That Councils call on the Australian Government to commit to the recommendations of the “2018 Regional Telecommunications Review” as published by the Regional Telecommunications Review committee.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Mark Coulton MP, Minister for Regional Communications.

18 Tenterfield Shire Council NSW

Councils call for the State and Federal Governments to increase funding for pasture research to assist in drought proofing Australia.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management.

19 Liverpool City Council NSW

That the Councils call on the federal government to enforce national housing development regulations that:

- Limits housing developments to cover no more than 40% of block size in urban Developments excluding secondary developments.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer the motion to state and territory associations for their consideration as town planning is not a Commonwealth responsibility.

20 Tenterfield Shire Council NSW

That Councils call on the Federal Government to support cultural burning on Crown Lands, National Parks and Forestry Corporation held lands in every State of Australia, and the training and employment of indigenous people to carry out this important task.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management.

21 Liverpool City Council NSW

That Councils call for State and Federal funding to provide Koala sanctuary and wildlife animal hospital in the southern end of the Western Sydney Parklands of the Liverpool LGA.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to LGNSW for their action as appropriate as this is not a national level issue.

22 Liverpool City Council NSW

That Councils call on the federal government to provide funding to fast track the Leppington to Western Sydney Airport rail link extension and the Sydney Metro City and South West project from Bankstown to Liverpool as well as funding for the Fifteenth Avenue Rapid Transit Corridor project from Liverpool to Western Sydney Airport.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer the motion to LGNSW for their action as appropriate as this is not a national issue but state specific.

23 Liverpool City Council NSW

That Councils call for a Sustainable Long Term Drought Mitigation Action Plan.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management.

24 Liverpool City Council NSW

That Councils advocate for a National Koala Protection Order.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment.

25 Shoalhaven City Council NSW

That Councils call upon:

1. The Federal Government to recognise that an increased uptake in walking/hiking in natural areas nationally would result in financial benefits and improved health and wellbeing for Australians as well as enabling greater economic growth, productivity, social and environmental benefits.
2. The Federal Government, in consultation with State, Territory and Local Government authorities, to allocate funding for a fifth round of the Building Better Regions funding (or alternate funding source) to a national infrastructure project to link up the gaps in existing walking paths/trails in both cities and the regions.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Michael McCormack MP, Deputy Prime Minister.

26 Shoalhaven City Council NSW

Councils call upon:

1. The Hon Sussan Ley MP to provide a response to the Climate Change Risk to Australia's Built Environment Report.

2. The Hon Sussan Ley MP to provide an update to on measures to be taken to address the risks to Australian communities which were identified in the report.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment.

27 Shoalhaven City Council NSW

That the National General Assembly calls upon the Federal Government so that:

1. Any Federal Funding earmarked for Royal Commission on Bushfires, be diverted to recovery efforts in bushfire affected communities.
2. Recommendations from the previous 57 formal public inquiries on Bushfires be enacted.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed that as the Royal Commission was almost concluded that ALGA should write back to Shoalhaven Council to give an update on the progress on this issue.

28 Shoalhaven City Council NSW

That Councils commend the Federal Government for Blackspot and Road to Recovery Programs and urge that those valuable programs be continued.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Michael McCormack MP, Deputy Prime Minister.

29 Shoalhaven City Council NSW

Councils call on the Federal Government to restore the quantum of Financial Assistance Grants to at least 1 per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Michael McCormack MP, Deputy Prime Minister.

30 Shoalhaven City Council NSW

Councils call on the Hon Anne Ruston, Federal Minister for Social Security, to implement an increase to 'Newstart Allowance' to reflect the rising cost of living.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to Senator the Hon Anne Ruston, Minister for Social Security.

31 Wingecarribee Shire Council NSW

1. That the Federal Government reviews the methodology used when determining the level of funding distributed to councils and that councils be invited to be part of the review process.
2. to consider an annual allocation of funding to all councils across the Australia to reduce the complexity of funding programs and that this annual allocation should take into consideration the size, population and infrastructure requirements of each council.

The ALGA Board noted the motion but did not refer it to the Government as Councils had not had an opportunity to debate the implications of the motion.

32 Broken Hill City Council NSW

Councils call on the Federal Government to investigate and prepare a public report into the need for the urgent approval and development of new long distance, multi-gigawatt transmission lines and a redesigned grid to cope with the rapid expansion of renewable energy sources feeding into it. The approval process for new transmission lines can average a decade and severely lags behind solar and wind developments which may take one to two years to be finalised. Such development is essential for Australia to reach its zero emission targets by 2050 and to significantly lower energy costs for Australian households and industry.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Angus Taylor MP, Minister for Energy.

33 Blacktown City Council NSW

Councils call on the states and Commonwealth to implement a framework to engage local government in resilience and disaster recovery so it would be a standing procedure whereby the resources of local government can be called upon for disaster recovery

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Emergency Management.

34 Wagga Wagga City Council NSW

Advocate to the NSW Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services, the Minister for Transport and Roads and the Shadow Minister for Disability Inclusion, to call upon the State Government to fund adult laydown change facilities along NSW highways.

Advocate for the National Construction Code to include laydown change facilities as a requirement at major highway service centres.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and that it called primarily for specific NSW action and agreed to refer the motion to LGNSW.

35 Sydney NSW

The National General Assembly calls on the government to sign and ratify the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (the Treaty) on behalf of the Australian people.

The National General Assembly note that the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), originally established in Australia in 2007, were awarded the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize for their ground-breaking efforts to achieve a global treaty for the prohibition of nuclear weapons. The Assembly congratulate ICAN on their historic achievement and contribution toward global nuclear disarmament.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to include the first part of the motion in a letter to Senator the Hon Marise Payne, Minister for Foreign Affairs (along with motions 37, 95 and 144).

36 District Council of Mount Remarkable SA

Councils recognise that an increased uptake in walking and cycling nationally would result in financial benefits and improved health and wellbeing for Australians as well as enabling greater economic growth, productivity, social and environmental benefits.

Councils therefore call on the Federal Government to, in consultation with State, Territory and Local Government authorities to allocate funding for a fifth round of the Building Better Regions funding (or alternate funding source) to a national infrastructure project to link up the gaps in existing walking & cycling paths/trails in both cities and the regions

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Michael McCormack MP, Deputy Prime Minister.

37 Inner West Council NSW

That ALGA call for the Federal Government to sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to Senator the Hon Marise Payne, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

38 Inner West Council NSW

That Councils:

1. Recognise the vital role of the media in informing communities about the actions of local government and keeping local government open to account;
2. Note the important role that community can and does play at times of emergency, including during the bushfire crisis this summer;
3. Express serious concerns at the closure and diminution of regional and suburban news outlets including television, radio and newspapers; and
4. Call on the Federal Government to increase funding to the Australian Community Radio Network around Australia to support local news programs that focus on local government and local issues.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts.

39 City of Mitcham SA

That Councils call on the Federal Government to investigate the environmental impacts of artificial turf and more environmentally appropriate alternatives for sporting surfaces.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment.

40 Tamworth Regional Council NSW

That Councils call on the Commonwealth Government to urgently review the current national approach to the management of natural disasters and catastrophic events to establish a more effective and efficient whole of government response that includes working better with State Government, Territory Government and Local Government.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Emergency Management

41 Ballina Shire Council NSW

That Councils call on the Australian Government to work in collaboration with councils and the states and territories to develop and implement a national climate change adaptation plan to minimise the destructive impact on our communities of coastal erosion, inundation and other hazards, including extreme weather events and bushfires.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment.

42 City of Adelaide SA

Councils call on the federal government to:

- Support the local government sector to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Revise existing disaster resilience strategies to specifically address the increasing, cumulative impacts of climate related disasters/emergencies
- Develop resources for disaster resilience in a changing climate that can be adopted and applied across Australia's emergency management sector and to support local government
- Identify priority areas for climate change focussed disaster resilience effort and investment.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment

43 City of Adelaide SA

Councils call on the State and Territory Governments to consider inclusionary zoning in planning systems to increase the supply of affordable housing in key local government areas. Increasing affordable housing options in the housing ecosystem can prevent the number of people entering into housing stress and form part of a long term response to reduce the number of people entering into homelessness.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to State and Territory Associations for action as appropriate.

44 City of Adelaide SA

Councils recognise that an increased uptake in walking and cycling nationally would result in financial benefits and improved health and wellbeing for Australians as well as enabling greater economic growth, productivity, social and environmental benefits.

Councils therefore call on the Federal Government to, in consultation with State, Territory and Local Government authorities to allocate funding for a fifth round of the Building Better Regions funding (or alternate funding source) to a national infrastructure project to link up the gaps in existing walking & cycling paths/trails in both cities and the regions.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Michael McCormack MP, Deputy Prime Minister.

45 Nillumbik Shire VIC

That Councils call on the Australian Government to work closely with state and local government to develop appropriate legislative policy, implementation frameworks and provide direct funding to assist local governments to implement actions, to mitigate potential climate change impacts likely to affect communities, economies and the environment.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment.

46 South Burnett Regional Council QLD

Councils call on the Federal Government to restore the Financial Assistance Grants to 1% equivalent of the Commonwealth Taxation revenue.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Michael McCormack MP, Deputy Prime Minister.

47 South Burnett Regional Council QLD

Councils call on the Federal Government to declare drought events a natural disaster.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management

48 Penrith City Council NSW

Councils call on Australian Government to develop and adopt a fire technician course so interested people can gain a qualification.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Karen Andrews MP, Minister for Industry, Science and Technology.

49 Ryde NSW

That ALGA: -

- a. Write to all Energy companies currently proposing fracking in the Northern Territory (NT):-
 - i. Noting that many Councils in Australia have Power Purchase Agreements with them.
 - ii. Noting that many Councils have endorsed and must uphold - among other things: Climate Emergency Declarations, Net zero emissions targets, resolutions to divest from Fossil fuels and developed Reconciliation Action Plans.
 - iii. Expressing our support for the traditional owners and communities in the NT, who have expressed their strong opposition to fracking due to the threat it poses to the climate, to their lands, waters, and rights.
 - iv. Requesting that Energy companies cease all plans to conduct fracking in the NT and due to its impact on climate, communities, water, and environment and commit to further investment in environmentally sustainable renewable energy projects.
- b. Forward a copy of the correspondence to all Australian Ministers for Local Government, Energy and Environment.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and that it was potentially contentious and had not be debated by councils at the NGA and therefore agreed to refer it to the State and Territory Associations for their action as appropriate.

50 Yarra City VIC

Councils call on the Australian, state and territory governments to:

- a) recognise and treat gambling harm as a public health issue;
- b) acknowledge the link between gambling harm, mental ill-health and other comorbidities, and include it in public and health frameworks and strategies; and
- c) address gambling harm through effective harm minimisation and prevention policies, led by public health professionals.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health.

51 Yarra City VIC

That ALGA advocate to the Australian Roads Research Board (ARRB) to develop standards/guidelines on the use of recycled plastics and glass in road base.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed that ALGA write to the Australian Roads Research Board.

52 Yarra City VIC

This National General Assembly acknowledges that ICAN was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in November 2017 for its ground-breaking efforts to achieve the global Treaty on the Prohibition of

Nuclear Weapons, after the treaty's adoption earlier in 2017 by the United Nations in New York and calls on the Australian Local Government Association to:

- a) publicise to local governments around Australia, the work of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), founded in Melbourne in 2007.
- b) urge local governments around Australia to ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, joining the 26 Australian Local Governments (including Sydney, Hobart, Yarra, Darebin, Freemantle, Coburn) and over 80 nations around the world who have declared their support for the treaty as the first international legal instrument to comprehensively outlaw nuclear weapons, setting out a pathway for their elimination.
- c) urge the Australian Government to ratify the United Nations Treaty

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to include part C in a letter to Senator the Hon Marise Payne, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

53 Yarra City VIC

To assist in tackling rising emissions from transport, Councils call on the Federal Government to reverse this rise in the transport sector through:

- a. promotion and support for a shift to electric cars, buses, and trucks, and rail electrification, powered by renewable energy: solar, wind, hydrogen;
- b. adoption of electric vehicle targets & further expanding recharging facilities;
- c. mandatory greenhouse gas emission (GGE) standards for cars and other vehicles;
- d. promotion and support for active transport - walking and cycling.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Michael McCormack MP, Deputy Prime Minister.

54 Yarra City VIC

In line with Federal Government's National Waste Policy and its adoption of a circular economy policy, Councils call on the Federal Government to further develop national standards on products and packaging as part of implementation of its circular economy policy:

- a. mandate a national packaging code for products and packaging with appropriate bin-top colours for recycling;
- b. incentivise the use of reusable packaging in the transportation of products;
- c. discourage over packaging of products;
- d. encourage new national markets for recycled products and for products and packaging that are not currently recycled;
- e. introduce mandatory product stewardship for problematic products and packaging; and
- f. discourage products and packaging that are not able to be recycled or reused and establish a program for these products and packaging to be phased out.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment.

55 Frankston City VIC

Councils call on the Australian, State and Territory Governments to ban political donations from any gambling license holder, including Board or committee members of an organisation with a gambling license, or their peak bodies.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to State and Territory Associations for their action as appropriate noting that gambling licences are a matter for state and territory governments.

56 Frankston City VIC

The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to work with the relevant State Governments to ensure a consistent, national-wide approach in supporting first time home buyers by fully exempting first home buyers from paying stamp duty regardless of the location or the price of the property.

The current approach in applying Stamp Duty to first home buyers is presently inconsistent between Australian States and countries, such as the United Kingdom which offers this exemption to encourage greater housing affordability for first-time home buyers.

Population increase combined with a lack of suitable new dwellings for families is likely to create strong long-term growth in house prices - raising fears this could spark an 'unaffordability' crisis.

The ALGA Board agreed to take no further action as stamp duty is a matter for state and territory governments. The Board agreed to write to the submitting council with the outcome of their motion.

57 Frankston City VIC

The National General Assembly calls on the ALGA National Conference to advocate to the Federal Treasurer, and Federal Shadow Treasurer, to consider the creation of a tax rebate for self-funded retirees that can be used to offset any tax liability they may incur.

Given the inability of self-funded retirees to access most state and federal concession schemes, this proposal will reward self-funded retirees who do not receive specific tax or rate relief. Many tax-funded retirees make financial sacrifices to ensure they are adequately prepared for retirement. By doing this, they take a significant strain off the public social security system. Therefore, self-funded retirees should be recompensed.

The ALGA Board agreed to take no further action as the motion did not meet the NGA criteria for motions. The Board agreed to write to the submitting council with the outcome of their motion.

58 Frankston City VIC

Councils call on the Minister for Environment to commission a study to determine the most effective forms of herbicide for widespread use in common public recreational spaces such as playgrounds and parks.

The requested research is to give consideration to mediums and/or products that could form the basis for a 'best practice' approach for local governments throughout Australia in respect to herbicide usage.

Potential research could explore mediums and products:

- that do not exposure the public to harmful health conditions (ie. cancer inducing elements);
- are economically cost-effective;
- have low impact on natural surroundings and the environment; and
- exhibit measurable effectiveness.

In the event such research ensues, it is further requested that local government sectors be properly consulted.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment.

59 Canterbury Bankstown Council NSW

Councils call on the Federal Government to recognise the Climate Emergency in Australia that has been acknowledged by 94 Councils to date and provide leadership and funding opportunities to assist Councils in meeting their greenhouse gas emission targets through effective mitigation and adaptation strategies and setting tighter targets with stricter time frames under new action rather than relying on complete historical savings.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment.

60 Canterbury Bankstown Council NSW

That Councils call on the Federal Government to extend a Statutory Government (copyright) licence to local government authorities in respect of planning functions, as is the case with State and Federal Governments.

If local government is to play the role of facilitator of public participation in the development application and planning proposal process, then by extension, the reproduction of documents and their availability online is a must.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Christian Porter MP, Attorney-General.

61 Moree Plains Shire Council NSW

That the Association continue to lobby for:

1. The overall Financial Assistance Grants allocation be restored to its original rate of 1% of GDP; and
2. A higher proportion of Financial Assistance Grants being distributed to regional areas through increasing the weighting given to:
 - a. Areas of high primary production;
 - b. Roads of demonstrated economic benefit, in particular to facilitate Inland Rail access; and

- c. Areas with difficult road construction conditions.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and that it is inconsistent with long standing ALGA and state and territory association policy and agreed to refer the motion to LGNSW for their consideration and discussions with the mover of the motion.

62 Moree Plains Shire Council NSW

That:

1. Council membership should be accessible to the broadest demographic possible.
2. Councillors be allowed to attend and participate from authorised facilities via video link in authorised locations remote from the council chambers.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to LGNSW for their consideration as it is a state based motion.

63 Moree Plains Shire Council NSW

That Local Government NSW makes representations to the NSW and Federal Treasurers regarding concerns over current and potential future natural disaster funding arrangements. In particular:

- a. The definition of a natural disaster should be linked to the capacity of a community to recover from an event, rather than a definition of 'serious disruption';
- b. That funding be directed to outcomes that are more resilient to future natural disasters so that community betterment is achieved;
- c. That no further cost shifting occur to local government, noting proposals to increase the level of contribution that councils are required to make;
- d. Relief funding recognises the needs of business, in particular small business, to require support to recover from a range of natural disasters; and
- e. That support be provided post-disaster to improve community social and economic resilience to future events.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to LGNSW for their consideration as it is a state based motion.

64 Moree Plains Shire Council NSW

The State Government be requested to lobby the Federal Government to introduce taxation benefits applicable to primary produces available to rural and remote small business whose majority of turnover is from the primary producer sector.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to LGNSW for their consideration as it is a state based motion.

65 Moree Plains Shire Council NSW

That Local Government NSW requests the NSW Minister for Police and Emergency Services to preserve the historic value of museum collections by amending Clause 59 (4) (A) of the Firearms Regulation 2017. The amendment should remove the condition that museums must render pistols and prohibitive firearms permanently inoperable and instead state that these firearms should be rendered temporarily inoperable.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to LGNSW for their consideration as it is a state based motion.

66 Moree Plains Shire Council NSW

The State Government request the NSW Rural Fire Service introduce a system of reward for NSW SES and NSW Rural Fire Service Volunteers through discounts given by Corporate and Small Business within NSW. The organisations issue plastic Identification Cards so as to allow volunteers, to be able to identify themselves, to access discounts from such organisations when travelling on holidays or for personnel reasons. The word, VOLUNTEER, be displayed on the Identification Cards and uniforms.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to LGNSW for their consideration as it is a state based motion.

67 Moree Plains Shire Council NSW

That representations be made to the Insurance Council of Australia to request that their membership provide as a standard part of building insurance policies cover for site clearance in the absence of proposed reconstruction of a building.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to write to the Insurance Council of Australia.

68 Albury City Council NSW

Councils advocate to the Federal Government that the current Federal/State disaster arrangements be reviewed to assess:

- The need to ensure that disaster recovery places most emphasis on infrastructure that improves flood resilience as compared to simple replacement of the infrastructure in place at the time of the flood;
- The appropriateness of the current cost thresholds which trigger disaster arrangements and the degree to which these amounts are manageable by local government;
- The role of the insurance industry in sending price signals, but also the impacts of those price signals on insurance affordability for existing landholders.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Emergency Management

69 Moree Plains Shire Council NSW

That the NGA call on the Federal Government to provide sustainable funding that will allow Councils to strategically plan for the maintenance, to all-weather standard local roads, that form essential 'first and last mile' links in modern logistics chains for agriculture and other time-sensitive goods. Further, that such funding be based on the productivity benefits of improved logistics together with an assessment of the benefits of a shift to rail, in particular to the Inland Rail project.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Michael McCormack MP, Deputy Prime Minister.

70 Moree Plains Shire Council NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to request that the Productivity Commission formally enquire into the current allocation mechanism and total quantum of Federal Financial Assistance Grants. The suggested terms of reference of the enquiry are to include, but not limited to:

- the categories of Councils and whether these adequately reflect the variations across Councils,
- the degree to which the current grant formulae correctly represents the differing capacities of Councils to deliver services
- Whether the overall quantum of the grants is sufficient to ensure the long term financial sustainability of local government.

The ALGA Board noted the motion but took no further action as councils had not had the opportunity to debate the motion at an NGA.

71 Mid-Coast Council NSW

That ALGA

1. Objects to the requirement for Disclosure of Interest Returns of Councillors and Designated Persons in New South Wales being published on any website as proposed by the New South Wales Information Privacy Commissioner's Guideline 1.
2. Lobbies for a standard disclosure of interest return to apply equally to all levels of government.
3. Lobbies the relevant authorities to reverse the decision to publish Disclosure of Interest Returns of Councillors and Designated Persons on any website for the protection and safety of councillors and staff.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to LGNSW for their consideration as it is a state based motion.

72 City of Marion SA

That the National General Assembly call on the State Local Government Associations to take the lead on managing industrial relations and negotiate 4 Enterprise Bargaining Agreements (EBA) per State. These agreements would be:

- 1 EBA for indoor staff i.e. ASU for Metropolitan Councils;
- 1 EBA for outdoor staff i.e. AWU for Metropolitan Councils;
- 1 EBA for indoor staff i.e. ASU for Rural Councils;
- 1 EBA for outdoor staff i.e. AWU for Rural Councils

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to State and Territory Associations for their action as appropriate

73 Logan City Council QLD

Councils call on the Australian Government to investigate opportunities for place-based social investment and service integration reforms that reflect the collective impact model, in an effort to tackle complex social issues in Australia.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to Senator the Hon Anne Ruston, Minister for Social Services.

74 Logan City Council QLD

Councils call on the Australian Government to review the EPBC Offset Policy applicable for each State and/or Territory in an effort to prioritise offset delivery within the same local government and/or region and to combat climate change.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment.

75 Alpine Shire VIC

The National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to:

- Endorse the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) Cities Appeal which seeks support for the adoption of the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.
- Sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons without delay.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to write to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator the Hon Marise Payne on part b of the motion.

76 District Council of Streaky Bay SA

That partnering arrangements in rural and remote areas provide access to whole of life infrastructure options and planning and zoning requirements are designed to more easily accommodate these requirements.

The ALGA Board agreed to take no further action as planning and zoning are state and territory issues and agreed to write to the submitting council.

77 District Council of Streaky Bay SA

That subsidies be provided to low income community members, particularly those in community and low cost housing, to allow them access to renewable energies.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Angus Taylor MP, Minister for Energy

78 District Council of Streaky Bay SA

That a way to facilitate effective communications between states, including Local Councils, during national crises be developed to ensure a single point of truth is possible for all responding and affected agencies.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer the motion to LGASA as this is primarily a matter about State Government issues between SA and WA.

79 District Council of Streaky Bay SA

That Local Councils are provided support to access partnerships with national and international businesses to allow access to such emerging technologies as micro-satellite communications options.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, Minister for Communications.

80 District Council of Streaky Bay SA

That rural and remote Councils of Australia are provided infrastructure, or alternate systems, that enable the adoption of renewable energies in larger numbers.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Angus Taylor MP, Minister for Energy.

81 District Council of Streaky Bay SA

That Research and Development Funding be made available to take advantage of Australia's unique opportunities to explore new and developing agricultural opportunities, including seaweed farming, equal access to genetically modified species of grain and vegetable products etc to meet the increasing food supply needs of the Asian market.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Agriculture.

82 District Council of Streaky Bay SA

That further funding be allocated to rural and remote Councils to address upgrade of aerodrome facilities to support linkages between larger international ports and rural and remote areas.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Michael McCormack MP, Deputy Prime Minister.

83 Parkes Shire Council NSW

That Councils call on the Federal and State Governments to;

Encourage all levels of government to work collaboratively to establish new models and incentive plans/packages to attract and retain a sustainable health workforce for regional, rural and remote areas.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Mark Coulton MP, Minister for Regional Health.

84 Parkes Shire Council NSW

Councils call on the Federal and State Governments to;

Continue and expand the aid to farmers and business affected by the current and continuing drought.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Drought.

85 Livingstone Shire Council QLD

That Councils call on the Federal Government to require the Department of Defence to pay applicable rates and charges to the relevant Local Government Council on land owned by the department that was previously privately owned to reduce the financial pressure on the balance of the rateable properties within local government areas.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, Treasurer.

86 Maribyrnong City VIC

Councils call on the State Government/Federal Government to sponsor, promote and support visual and public art projects in local government areas, across Australia, through a public funding or grants opportunity that highlight the impacts and challenges of climate change as it is now affecting communities at a local level.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment.

87 Maribyrnong City VIC

The National General Assembly calls on Local Governments throughout Australia to:

- mobilise community information and discussions on aged care facility staffing ratios;
- actively promote information, opinions, discussion through social media; and

- deploy proactive political advocacy strategies with local communities to call on the Federal Government to have the Aged Care Amendment (Staffing Ratios Disclosure) Bill 2019 re-presented & brought into legislation.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer the motion to State and Territory Associations for their action as appropriate.

88 Maribyrnong City VIC

Councils call on the Federal Government to formally recognise we are in a state of climate emergency and actively work with Local Government, industry and communities to reduce waste production, set a zero emission targets, support the development of renewable energy industries, incentivise all sectors to change to more efficient technologies, significantly increase urban vegetation cover, and increase support for households to access energy efficient upgrades.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment.

89 East Gippsland Shire VIC

Councils call on the Federal Government to expand and increase the funding of the Roads of Strategic Importance initiative (ROSI) by focusing on rural regions hit by the 2019/2020 bushfires and floods. This funding will enable fire and flood ravaged communities to upgrade freight and road corridors to fund bridge and culvert upgrades, road sealing, strengthening and widening, creating a more reliable and safer road network and facilitate tourism opportunities which will assist the economic recovery of fire and flood ravaged rural communities. This will assist Council's work with isolated communities. East Gippsland Shire Council nominates the Princes Highway as roads of strategic importance that require that should be the focus of this funding.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Michael McCormack MP, Deputy Prime Minister.

90 East Gippsland Shire VIC

Councils call on the Federal Government to require Telecommunication companies to ensure their infrastructure is fire resistant and provides a regular maintenance routine to minimize the risk of infrastructure loss during critical risk events such as fire, flood or weather incidents.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Emergency Management.

91 East Gippsland Shire VIC

Councils call on the Federal Government to require Telecommunication companies to provide infrastructure and communication devices that are resilient and reliable in high risk areas. So that all communities across Australia have access to NBN satellite infrastructure to access news and other critical information in times of high risk such as fire, flood and other weather-related events.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, Minister for Communications.

92 Bass Coast Shire VIC

Councils call on the Australian Government to commit to increased action to address the growing problem of homelessness in rural and regional Australia; specifically to fund the development of localised strategic plans and audits so that States can allocate Housing funds based on needs analysis and strategic direction.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Michael Sukkar MP, Minister for Housing.

93 Bass Coast Shire VIC

Councils call on the Australian Government to develop a revised Climate Change Policy, which includes a national framework regarding asset protection, planning controls and erosion mitigation, and the establishment of national funding programs available directly to Local Governments to assist with both preventative and reactive measures to deal with the environmental impacts of Climate Change.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment.

94 Bass Coast Shire VIC

Councils call on the Australian Government to review the exemption of commercial activities from paying local government authority rates. Current exemption categories include private schools, universities, private schools, RSL gaming venues, mining, and commercial activities on crown land. These exemptions place an unnecessary burden on all other rateable properties across Australia.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, Treasurer.

95 Benalla Rural City VIC

Nuclear weapons pose an unacceptable threat to people everywhere. That is why the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) was adopted in July 2017 by 122 member states of the United Nations.

The TPNW is the first treaty to comprehensively outlaw nuclear weapons, setting out a pathway for their total elimination.

Nuclear dangers are increasing worldwide, and with more than 13,500 nuclear weapons still in existence the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons is a humanitarian imperative.

That councils urge the Australian Government to sign and ratify the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to Senator the Hon Marise Payne, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

96 Broken Hill City Council NSW

That NSW Councils be given the opportunity to attend future National General Assemblies of Local Government via videoconference which includes the ability to vote on conference motions.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and decided to consider it again following the 2021 National General Assembly (which is being held as a hybrid event) in order to consider the merits of holding the event fully or partially online.

97 Litchfield Council NT

Councils call on the Federal Government to provide increased funding towards reducing the amount of 'fuel loads' throughout the natural environment to specifically, but not exclusively, combat the spread of Gamba Grass (*Andropogon gayanus*) which is an Australian Government weed of National Significance and a declared weed in Western Australia, Northern Territory and Queensland.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Emergency Services.

98 Wollongong City Council NSW

Councils call on the Commonwealth Government to:

1. Liaise with State and Territory Governments to recognise the need for coordination of services and utilities to mitigate damage to community assets such as roads, footpaths and cycleways.
2. Amend legislation accordingly to mitigate costs on local government arising from the installation and maintenance of services and utilities.
3. Amend legislation to ensure works are reinstated to a like-for-like standard.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, Minister for Communications.

99 Orange City Council NSW

Councils call on the Federal Government to investigate where and how Australia's water resources can be sustainably developed including the construction of more water storage dams to ensure regional water supply is more resilient during periods of extreme dry weather and drought.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Keith Pitt MP, Minister for Resources, Water and Northern Australia

100 Albury City Council NSW

Councils call on the Federal Government to broaden and strengthen Australia's product stewardship schemes so that a much wider range of products are covered, including textiles, electronics and consumer goods, which will stop the costs of disposing of goods being born by everyone in the community and instead mean that companies responsible for producing the goods are responsible for their disposal costs

- a. Set targets and legislation to phase out the use of new materials for use in products and packaging in Australia (except for essential needs such as some medical uses)
- b. Ban the import and production of hard-to-recycle materials (except for essential needs such as some medical uses).
- c. Ensure that there are effective standards for the quality of recycled materials used in Australia.
- d. Set high minimum recycled content procurement targets in all levels of government

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment

101 Darebin City VIC

That the Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly.

1. Calls on the federal government to accept its obligations as a member of the international community and treat asylum seekers with compassion, care and dignity.
2. Release all refugee and asylum seekers being held in immigration detention into the Australian community, so they can live without harm and fear as part of the broader community while applications are being processed.

The ALGA Board noted the motion but agreed to take no further action as this is not perceived to be a local government issue.

102 Darebin City VIC

That the Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly Support the Australian Human Rights Commission's call for a National Charter of Human Rights.

The ALGA Board noted the motion but agreed to take no further action as this is not perceived to be a local government issue.

103 Boroondara City VIC

Councils call on the Australian Government to commit to ongoing funding for year-before-school kindergarten (4 year old preschool/kindergarten), recognising the importance of early education in the same way primary and secondary school education is funded in an ongoing manner.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Dan Tehan MP, Minister for Education.

104 Brimbank City VIC

Councils call on the Australian Government to engage with and support the Local Government Mayoral Taskforce for People Seeking Asylum, to develop a Newly Arrived Migrant, Asylum Seeker and Refugee Action Plan. The new Action Plan should seek to better coordinate federal, state, and local government policy, resources and networks in welcoming and supporting newly arrived migrants and asylum seekers, including through increased Federal Government funding for asylum seeker support services.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Peter Dutton MP, Minister for Immigration.

105 Brimbank City VIC

Councils, recognising the impact of gambling harm on local communities around Australia, call on the Federal Government to introduce more stringent classification of video games that include loot boxes or similar items, to reduce the harm that arises from the convergence of gaming and gambling, and the consequent normalisation of gambling. That this National General Assembly also calls on the Federal Government to close existing loopholes which enable gambling advertisements to be broadcast on television and radio during children's viewing and listening hours.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to write a follow up letter to the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, Minister for Communications.

106 Brimbank City VIC

Councils call on the Federal Government to work with State and Territory Governments, and local government sector to establish a "Land Contamination National Framework", that should assess the extent of known and potentially contaminated land legacy issues associated with aviation sites, defence sites, industrial sites, operating and closed landfills, including soil, water and vapour issues, and recognises:

- a. The roles and responsibilities that federal, state, territory, council and nongovernment entities played in land contamination issues
- b. The historic environmental inequity respective regions have experienced in terms of contamination, health and wellbeing
- c. Develop a new and "Environment Equity Package" to respond to land contamination issues across Australia which supports communities

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment

107 Brimbank City VIC

Councils call on the Australian Government to acknowledge that as Australia's population grows, demand for citizenship ceremonies is increasing, with growing costs to Councils, following the Department of Home Affairs indication that Citizenship Ceremonies should take place within 3 months of an applicant being approved.

The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide Councils with increased funding, resources and support to hold Ceremonies in a reasonable timeframe that meet demand.

The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to facilitate, fund, support and encourage region wide Citizenship Ceremonies amongst Council regions across the country, as a way to assist Councils to deliver Ceremonies in a reasonable timeframe that meet demand.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Peter Dutton MP, Minister for Immigration and Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs.

108 Brimbank City VIC

Councils call on the Federal Government to provide increased and ongoing funding certainty around girls and women sport and recreation grants in a fair and transparent way.

Councils call on the Federal Government, through Sport Australia, to work with all Local Government Areas (LGAs) around developing and committing to a fair and transparent funding pipeline that upgrades all community sport and recreation facilities to become female friendly compliant across Australia.

Councils call on the Federal Government through the Department of Education, and Sport Australia, to develop a nationwide Education-Sport Strategy that opens up school facilities outside hours for girls and women's sport.

Councils call on the Federal Government to consider identifying and funding for Regional Women in Sport Hubs.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Youth and Sport and Senator the Hon Marise Payne, Minister for Women.

109 Brimbank City VIC

Councils call on the Federal Government to:

- Provide increased support to the local government sector to encourage and inspire more women to consider nominating in Local Government Elections.
- To engage the Local Government sector to develop a comprehensive and integrated long term Girls and Women Community Leadership Strategy.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Senator Hon Marise Payne, Minister for Women

110 Mitchell Shire VIC

Councils call on the Federal Government, and in particular the Minister for Local Government, for an increase in the Financial Assistance Grants to support local governments to deliver a range of services including roads maintenance.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Mark Coulton MP, Minister for Local Government.

111 Mitchell Shire VIC

Councils call for a thorough review and re-evaluation of current practices regarding the integrated approach to the planning for and management of the risks associated with fire events, including consideration of the interface between urban communities and highly vegetated areas.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Emergency Management.

112 Alexandrina Council SA

Councils call on the Australian Government to ensure the agricultural productivity target is supported by a research program and/or incentives to develop innovative strategies for achieving that target in a water constrained future, including via the use of alternative water sources other than the Murray Darling Basin.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Agriculture

113 Mitchell Shire VIC

Councils call on the Federal and State Governments to increase funding for appropriate and accessible mental health services particularly within growth and interface areas.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health.

114 Mitchell Shire VIC

Councils call on the Federal Government to strengthen and support recycling and reprocessing markets in Australia onshore.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment.

115 Mitchell Shire VIC

Councils call on the Federal and State Governments for increased funding to plan for and ease congestion in and across growth areas.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Michael McCormack MP, Deputy Prime Minister.

116 Banyule City VIC

Councils call on the Federal Government to seek action to remove redundant aerial service authority cables in road reserves to improve visual impact.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, Minister for Communications.

117 Boroondara City VIC

Councils call on the Australian Government to:

Increase funding to the States for the adequate provision of public and social housing to address the crisis in homelessness and the demand for social housing.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Michael Sukkar MP, Minister for Housing.

118 Boroondara City VIC

Councils call on the Australian Government to provide ongoing funding to the States to further develop resources in all Local Government Authorities to ensure consistency of resourcing for emergency management related activities (planning, preparation, response and recovery).

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Emergency Management.

119 Willoughby City Council NSW

Councils call on the Australian Government to support the National Strategy for Climate Change and Health.

The ALGA Board agreed to take no further action as the motion sought support for a Third Party campaign.

120 Willoughby City Council NSW

Councils call on State and Federal Governments to provide funding to stimulate transition to underground power supply.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Angus Taylor MP, Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction.

121 Central Highlands Regional Council QLD

Councils call on the State/Commonwealth Governments to make funding available to develop innovative solutions for alternative water sources to provide for water security.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Keith Pitt MP, Minister for Resources, Water and Northern Australia.

122 Central Highlands Regional Council QLD

Councils call on the Federal Government to collaboratively develop relevant models of aged care for rural and remote areas.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health.

123 Central Highlands Regional Council QLD

Councils call on the Federal Government to establish National Data Standards to enable more efficient and effective reporting of local government data and to ensure that comparisons can be made on the same data assumptions across all states and councils.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Mark Coulton MP, Minister for Local Government

124 Moreland City VIC

Councils call on The Australian Government to:

- Commit to the creation of a Federal public transport funding stream for the states.
- Invest in research to build technologies in the area of low and zero carbon public transport infrastructure for Australian cities and towns.
- Commit to Australian built public transport rolling stock and associated infrastructure.
- Jointly fund rail infrastructure and bus acquisition programs with the states.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Michael McCormack MP, Deputy Prime Minister.

125 Moreland City VIC

The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

Sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons which proposes a clear action and outcome.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to Senator the Hon Marise Payne, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

126 Moreland City VIC

Councils call on the Australian Government to:

- Review legislation, policies and building codes to increase accessibility for people with a disability, focusing on the retail sector;
- Strengthen the Disability Discrimination Act by compelling businesses to comply with the legislation as opposed to it being triggered by a change of use, refurbishment or complaint.

Reliance on advocacy, complaint-based legislation and building codes does little to improve accessibility;

- Support businesses through awareness raising and resources to be more accessible;
- Uphold Article 9 of the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, so all people with a disability have the right to freedom of movement and equal access to all aspects of social, commercial and community life;
- Promote the economic and employment benefits for better accessibility in the retail sector.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Stuart Robert MP, Minister for the NDIS.

127 Bayside Council NSW

Bayside Council NSW calls on the Federal Government to remove its support for Mega Cruise Ship Terminal in Botany Bay at Yarra Bay/Molineux Point.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer the motion to LGNSW for their consideration as it is not a national issue.

128 Leeton Shire Council NSW

Councils call on the Australian Government to develop and implement a weed management plan to protect agricultural land from this well established and widespread weed species incursion in order to maintain the productivity of agricultural land and ensure the sustainability of regional communities by acknowledging that:

- I. FleaBane Conzys Species is widespread across agricultural land and is having a negative impact on the productivity of agricultural land
- II. FleaBane is resistant to standard and registered herbicides including Glyphosate
- III. limited state or federal funding is provided for the control of the FleaBane under the Biosecurity Act through the General Biosecurity Duty.
- IV. NSW Government Weed Action plan is focused on new and emerging weed varieties, and so Fleabane management is excluded from funding.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment.

129 Leeton Shire Council NSW

Councils call on the Australian Government to dedicate funds to increase drug and alcohol treatment and rehabilitation options in rural and regional areas, as a matter of priority.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Mark Coulton MP, Minister for Regional Health.

130 Leeton Shire Council NSW

Councils call on the Australian Government to support the goals of 2030 Roadmap Australian Agriculture's Plan for a \$100 billion industry but make a principle-based commitment nationally to ensure the plan is realistic, optimises water use and supports existing regional and rural communities and industries by maintaining agricultural diversity that builds resilience into our economies and helps rural communities thrive.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Agriculture.

131 Leeton Shire Council NSW

Councils call on the Australian Government to hold a referendum to amend the Constitution to recognise local government as an important, legitimate and essential element in Australia's system of government.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Mark Coulton MP, Minister for Local Government.

132 Leeton Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to protect national food security and the sustainability of regional irrigation communities by:

- acknowledging irrigation communities were purposefully built by governments to feed and drought proof the nation
- acknowledging the unintended adverse impacts on regional communities as a result of certain water policy decisions and the operation of water trading markets
- acknowledging that the nation's primary producers are adept at using water efficiently and responsibly through on-farm practices and infrastructure
- providing enhanced water access for general security water holders in regional communities who depend on the availability of this water for their livelihoods and employment
- ensuring decisions foster diversity in agriculture and value adding industries as diversity is our strength and builds resilience in our communities and economies

The ALGA Board noted the importance of the motion and agreed to write to Leeton Council and suggest they resubmit it for debate at the 2021 NGA.

133 City of Palmerston NT

Councils call on the Australian Government to utilise its powers under section 51 of the Australian Constitution to ensure that all remote and regional areas of Australia have access to alternative, robust and reliable telecommunications separate to the services provided by Telstra.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Mark Coulton MP, Minister for Regional Communications.

134 Gwydir Shire Council NSW

That the National General Assembly advises the Federal Government that it endorses a reduction of the population component of the Financial Assistance Grant from 30% to 15% in Section 6.2 (b) of the Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer the motion to LGNSW for their consideration and discussions with the mover of the motion.

135 Blue Mountains City Council NSW

Councils call on the Australian Commonwealth Government to declare a climate change emergency and include a climate change impact fund in the annual budget.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment.

136 Gwydir Shire Council NSW

Councils seek an urgent review of the existing Federal Native Title provisions relating to the approval processes required regarding public infrastructure projects in order to develop a timely resolution process that does not unreasonably delay important projects.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Christian Porter MP, Attorney General.

137 Blue Mountains City Council NSW

Councils call on the Council of Australian Governments to convene an urgent meeting to:

1. Determine and implement practical steps to minimise the impact of extreme weather events like the recent bushfire events that have ravaged the south-eastern half of the continent, storm surges and coastal erosion that threatens the heavily populated areas of Australia and tropical cyclones, flooding and droughts.
2. Determine and implement practical steps to:
 - a. reduce; and
 - b. drawdown carbon pollution going into the atmosphere through a collaborative partnership between all 3 levels of government, state, federal and state based Local Government Associations; and
3. Plan and coordinate infrastructure upgrades and connectivity that will contribute to lowering emissions and protecting communities from extreme weather events.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Angus Taylor MP, Minister for Energy and Emissions reduction.

138 Macedon Ranges Shire VIC

Councils call upon the Australian Government to provide financial and resource support to allow local councils to undertake preparedness activities, implement mitigation measures and develop flexible recovery programs in relation to significant adverse weather events and natural disasters. This support would ensure that planning and preparation at the local level is able to anticipate what is needed, respond to and recover from current and future natural disaster situations. Preparation and responses within this planning need to be led by local government to focus on local risk mitigation, with assistance being provided by the Federal government, in coordination with the State and Territory governments and peak local government bodies, in each state or territory.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Emergency Management.

139 Macedon Ranges Shire VIC

Councils call upon the Australian Government to work with local, state and territory governments and private businesses and investors to provide increased policy and financial support to the manufacturing industry within Australia to be able to make use of resources recovered from

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment.

140 Macedon Ranges Shire VIC

Councils call on the Australian Government to introduce mandatory product labelling that clearly states that a product meets Australian Standards for home, or kerbside collection, composting and provide an education campaign for states and territories to use to assist with promoting this, once it is introduced. No other labelling as 'biodegradable' or 'compostable' should be allowed unless it conforms to the Australian Standards.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment.

141 Macedon Ranges Shire VIC

Councils call on the Australian Government to ban all fragmentable polypropylene products such as "oxo- biodegradable" and "enzyme mediated polyethylene" (collectively called fragmentable polyethylene) from import, manufacturing and use in Australia.

The ALGA Board agreed to write to the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment

142 Ballina Shire Council NSW

Councils call on the Federal Government to increase the Newstart, Youth Allowance and related payments by a minimum of \$75 per week.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to Senator the Hon Anne Ruston, Minister for Families and Social Services

143 City of Fremantle WA

Councils urge the Australian Government to sign and ratify the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to Senator the Hon Marise Payne, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

144 Brisbane City Council QLD

Federal funding to local government for delivery and management of infrastructure

Councils call on the Australian Government to increase the opportunities and levels of funding provided to local government for the delivery and management of transport infrastructure to local communities.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Michael McCormack MP, Deputy Prime Minister.

145 Brisbane City Council QLD

Federal funding for infrastructure asset data collection and management

Councils call on the Australian Government to provide funding for local governments to audit and maintain data on their infrastructure asset base.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Mark Coulton MP, Minister for Local Government.

146 Wattle Range Council SA

Councils call on the Australian Federal Government to pursue the enhancement of NBN services to rural and remote Australia.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Mark Coulton MP, Minister for Regional Communications.

147 Gunnedah Shire Council NSW

1. That, the National General Assembly calls upon the Commonwealth Government to ensure that the Federal Financial Assistance Grants (FAGS) to Local Government be restored to the level of 1% of total Taxation Revenue.
2. That, the increased Revenue to be distributed through the States and Territories Grants Commission's is only eligible to the Local Roads Component.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to write to Gunnedah Shire council noting that the call for 1% has been referred to the Minister.

148 Gunnedah Shire Council NSW

1. Councils call upon the Commonwealth Government to establish a funding stream to be administered through the respective States and Territories for the sole purpose of Councils to undertake comprehensive study of bush fire risk to habited towns, villages and communities throughout their respective Local Government areas.
2. That, further funding is to be available to enable mitigation measures to identified bush fire risks.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Emergency Management

149 Gunnedah Shire Council NSW

1. That, the National General Assembly calls upon the Commonwealth Government to mandate that a percent no less than 20% of funds committed to New South Wales TAFE support rural Institutes to allow apprenticeship courses to be run with no minimum student requirements.
2. That, the National General Assembly calls upon the Commonwealth Government to mandate that New South Wales TAFE allows composite classes within apprenticeship courses to be run in Rural Institutes.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer the motion to LGNSW for their consideration as it is not a national issue.

150 City of Whittlesea VIC

Councils call on the Australian Government to ban all forms of sports gambling advertisements on broadcast and online platforms.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, Minister for Communications.

151 City of Whittlesea VIC

Councils call on the Australian Government to reinstate the National Rental Affordability Scheme.

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Michael Sukkar MP, Minister for Housing.

152 Adelaide Plains Council

Councils call on the Australian Government to review the current responsibility for managing Australian national rail corridors, including, but not limited to, undertaking a review of the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) Charter with a view to mitigate the risks to public safety (including fire and flood).

The ALGA Board noted the motion and agreed to refer it to the Hon Michael McCormack MP, Deputy Prime Minister.

2020

Ministerial

Correspondence



THE HON ANGUS TAYLOR MP
MINISTER FOR ENERGY AND EMISSIONS REDUCTION

MC20-058932

Mayor David O'Loughlin
President
Australian Local Government Association
8 Geils Court
DEAKIN ACT 2600

25 MAR 2021

Dear Mayor *David*

Thank you for your letter of 21 August 2020 regarding motions submitted by councils to the Australian Local Government Association. I appreciate the time you have taken to bring these motions to my attention.

Please see advice in response to each of the motions below.

Motion 32:

Councils call on the Federal Government to investigate and prepare a public report into the need for the urgent approval and development of new long distance, multi-gigawatt transmission lines and a redesigned grid to cope with the rapid expansion of renewable energy sources feeding into it. The approval process for new transmission lines can average a decade and severely lags behind solar and wind developments which may take one to two years to be finalised. Such development is essential for Australia to reach its zero emission targets by 2050 and to significantly lower energy costs for Australian households and industry.

The Liberal National Government, alongside state and territory governments, is pursuing a number of reforms to manage the transition of the electricity system. These include whole of system planning through the Integrated System Plan (ISP), and the work to reform and future proof the electricity market, the Post 2025 Market Design.

Both of these pieces of work include consideration of Renewable Energy Zones (REZ). The ISP predicts the requirements for future REZs, and the infrastructure required to support them, while the Post 2025 Market Design considers innovative models for how they could be delivered, transmission access reform, and transmission and generation investment co-ordination.

While the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) anticipates substantial new network investment is needed to facilitate new generation and storage, it is critical that these new investments in monopoly infrastructure are proportionate and efficient, as ultimately it is consumers who pay for this infrastructure through their bills.

Motion 77:

That subsidies be provided to low income community members, particularly those in community and low cost housing, to allow them access to renewable energies.

The Government's Small-scale Renewable Energy Scheme (SRES) helps home-owners to install small-scale renewable technologies such as rooftop solar panels and solar hot water systems. Participants in the scheme are entitled to Small-scale Technology Certificates (STCs) for every megawatt hour (MWh) of electricity generated or displaced by the system over a given deeming period. STCs are created upfront when the system is installed. Homeowners usually assign the right to create their STCs to the system installer in exchange for a discount on the installation and purchase price of the system. The installer then recoups these costs by selling the STCs. The SRES is currently estimated to reduce the cost of a fully installed solar system by around 30 per cent.

In addition to the SRES, a number of state and territory governments have rebate or loan schemes to further support the uptake of solar panels and batteries. Some of these programs are specifically targeted at low income households or provide a higher subsidy for low income households.

The Government, through the Clean Energy Finance Corporation and Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA), is supporting the expansion of a project led by Tesla, installed at Housing SA residences. Under this initiative, participating Housing SA tenants will have 5 kilowatts of solar installed at their home, along with a 13.5-kilowatt hour Tesla Powerwall battery storage system.

In December 2019, Energy Ministers agreed to undertake a scope of work to better understand energy disadvantage in Australia and consider measures to improve access for vulnerable consumers to energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies. The work program will report preliminary findings to the Energy Ministers by March 2021.

Motion 80:

That rural and remote Councils of Australia are provided infrastructure, or alternate systems, that enable the adoption of renewable energies in larger numbers.

The Government is committed to supporting regional Australia, and has delivered significant investments focused on creating jobs and driving economic growth in our regions.

The Government's \$50.4 million Regional and Remote Communities Reliability Fund (the Fund) is an important part of this commitment. Feasibility studies supported by the Fund will help communities understand whether establishing a microgrid, or upgrading existing technologies which provide an off-grid source of power would better meet their electricity supply needs. Where feasibility studies find that microgrids are economically viable, moving some customers to off-grid supply could save hundreds of millions of dollars in network costs and improve the integration of distributed energy resources.

Building on the success of the current Regional and Remote Communities Reliability Fund, the Government announced a further \$53.6 million microgrid program in the 2020/21 Budget to support the development of pilot projects in regional Australia. This will help deliver more affordable reliable power in regional communities across Australia.

The Government is supporting a feasibility study to develop the technical design and commercial process for the New England Transmission Infrastructure through a grant from the ARENA. The project will allow for the connection of an additional 1,400 MW of renewable energy generation to the grid within the next three to five years. The study will also help to inform the feasibility study into the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone. Renewable Energy Zones in NSW are a key pillar of the Commonwealth-NSW State Energy Deal.

Motion 120:

Councils call on State and Federal Governments to provide funding to stimulate transition to underground power supply.

The Australian Energy Regulator plays an important role in evaluating the costs and benefits of network assets, as per the National Electricity Law and the National Electricity Objective (NEO). The NEO requires the Regulator to promote investment that is in the long term interest of consumers, including price, safety and reliability.

The benefits of moving power supply underground would need to balance the increased cost to consumers against the improved safety and reliability. For more information on the NEO, please visit: www.aemc.gov.au/regulation/regulation.

Motion 138:

Councils call on the Council of Australian Governments to convene an urgent meeting to:

- 1. Determine and implement practical steps to minimise the impact of extreme weather events like the recent bushfire events that have ravaged the south-eastern half of the continent, storm surges and coastal erosion that threatens the heavily populated areas of Australia and tropical cyclones, flooding and droughts.*
- 2. Determine and implement practical steps to:*
 - a) reduce; and*
 - b) drawdown carbon pollution going into the atmosphere through a collaborative partnership between all 3 levels of government, state, federal and state based Local Government Associations; and*
- 3. Plan and coordinate infrastructure upgrades and connectivity that will contribute to lowering emissions and protecting communities from extreme weather events.*

In July 2017, Energy Ministers agreed to act on Finkel Review Recommendation 2.11, “In recognition of the increased severity of extreme weather, by end-2018 the [former] COAG Energy Council should develop a strategy to improve the integrity of energy infrastructure and the accuracy of supply and demand forecasting”.

The Government’s Electricity Sector Climate Information project is providing \$6.1 million over 3 years from 2018-19 to improve climate and extreme weather information for the electricity sector. The project is designed to improve the reliability and resilience of the National Electricity Market (NEM) to the risks from climate change and extreme weather.

The Government has also committed \$25 million in the 2019-20 Budget towards the establishment of a National Centre for Coasts, Environment and Climate to improve understanding of the impacts of climate change on coastal environments.

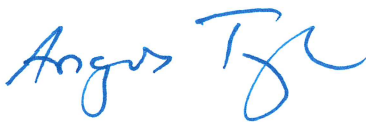
The Government has policies and frameworks in place to ensure the resilience of critical infrastructure, including through the Critical Infrastructure Resilience Strategy and the *Security of Critical Infrastructure Act 2018*. In terms of the NEM, there is a wide range of National Electricity Rules that are designed to provide reliable and affordable power. These include giving AEMO the tools it needs to ensure the secure operation of the NEM during and after a disaster.

Importantly, governments and industry provide support to disaster affected communities. During the 2019-20 season, energy businesses provided a range of assistance to customers that were affected by the bushfires, such as flexible payments and bill freezes, waiving some network charges, direct customer payments, discounts for firefighters and charitable donations.

In restoring power to their affected customers, distribution network service providers prioritised critical services, including hospitals, aged care facilities, life support patients, water pumping stations and petrol stations. In areas where restoration of power was significantly delayed, service providers offered customers the use of generators (where feasible).

Thank you again for bringing these motions to the Government's attention.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Angus Taylor', with a stylized flourish at the end.

ANGUS TAYLOR



Senator the Hon Anne Ruston

**Minister for Families and Social Services
Senator for South Australia
Manager of Government Business in the Senate**

Ref: MC20-014423

Mayor David O'Loughlin
Mayor of Prospect
President of the Australian Local Government Association
8 Geils Court
DEAKIN ACT 2600

Dear Mayor O'Loughlin

Thank you for your letters dated 21 August 2020 to myself and the Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme and Minister for Government Services, the Hon Stuart Robert MP, regarding motions presented for your 2020 National General Assembly.

Motions 30 and 143 relate to income support. The Government is acting decisively in the national interest to support households and businesses and address the significant economic consequences of COVID-19.

The Australian social security system is a taxpayer-funded, non-contributory system based on the concepts of residence and need. In making spending decisions, the Government has to balance the need to support vulnerable Australians with the need to ensure that the sustainability of the social security system is maintained over the long term.

Working age payments are designed to provide a safety net for people who require financial assistance, while maintaining incentives for people to join the workforce. The Government has extended the temporary Coronavirus Supplement from 25 September 2020 to 31 December 2020. The initial rate of the Coronavirus Supplement was set at \$550 per fortnight until 24 September 2020. From 25 September 2020 to 31 December 2020, the supplement has been adjusted to \$250 per fortnight to reflect the gradually improving economic and labour market conditions.

The Government has changed the JobSeeker Payment and Youth Allowance (other) income tests to improve incentives for individuals to re-enter the workforce or take on additional work as the economy recovers.

From 25 September 2020, the personal income test for JobSeeker Payment and Youth Allowance (other) temporarily changed to a \$300 per fortnight income free area and a 60 cent taper for income above the free area. This is an increase to the previous income free areas for JobSeeker Payment and Youth Allowance, which has allowed recipients of these payments to earn more before their rate of payment is affected.

The Government is closely monitoring the health, economic and social impacts of COVID-19 and will continue to take a measured approach as the situation evolves.

Motion 50 calls on Australian governments to recognise and treat gambling harm as a public health issue; acknowledge the link between gambling harm, mental ill-health and other comorbidities; include it in public and health frameworks and strategies; and address gambling harm through effective harm minimisation and prevention policies, led by public health professionals.

The Government takes gambling harm to Australians seriously and recognises the impact gambling can have on consumers, their families and communities. That is why on 30 November 2018, the Government announced the joint Commonwealth, state and territory National Consumer Protection Framework for online wagering (National Framework) in Australia.

The National Framework provides – for the first time – strong, nationally consistent protections for consumers of Australian interactive wagering services. It consists of ten measures, which aim to reduce the harm that can be caused by online wagering to consumers. The measures provide people with easy-to-use tools and information to better control their gambling from a voluntary opt-out pre commitment scheme through to a national self-exclusion register.

The first six measures have already been implemented by states and territory governments. The final four measures include activity statements, consistent gambling messaging, staff training, and the National Self-Exclusion Register.

To reduce gambling harm, the Government also provides funding for financial counsellors to help people, their families and friends affected by problem gambling. The Government has committed nearly \$14 million over two and half years to 30 June 2021 specifically for problem gambling financial counselling. As part of the 2020-21 Budget, the Government has made the problem gambling financial counselling an ongoing program from 1 July 2021.

This is in addition to more than \$76 million to 30 June 2023 for general financial counselling services and support, including the National Debt Helpline.

The National Debt Helpline provides a single contact point for people to access financial counselling, either immediately on the phone or via referral to face-to-face services. Services are voluntary, free and confidential for gamblers and their families. The National Debt Helpline can be contacted on 1800 007 007 or at www.ndh.org.au/.

The Government also encourages state and territory governments, who have the primary responsibility for gambling regulation in Australia, to have strong harm minimisation measures in place. State and territory governments are responsible for the regulation of legal forms of gambling, including poker machines, in Australia.

Motion 73 calls on the Government to investigate opportunities for place-based social investment and service integration reforms that reflect the collective impact model, in an effort to tackle complex social issues in Australia.

The Government's Stronger Places, Stronger People initiative is a place-based collective impact initiative being implemented in partnership with state and territory governments and 10 communities across Australia. Local government has a very important role to play in the initiative.

Stronger Places, Stronger People recognises that no single policy, government department, organisation or program can solve the complex and interconnected problems facing most people living in communities where poverty and disadvantage is concentrated, and that solutions that offer most promise will be achieved through an integrated policy and investment approach, executed through locally tailored, evidence driven solutions to local problems in partnership with local people.

The Government is investing \$35 million over five years in Stronger Places, Stronger People, and there will also be co-investment from state and territory governments, and in some cases philanthropic organisations.

Seven Stronger Places, Stronger People communities have been announced. These include Logan, Rockhampton and Gladstone in Queensland, Bourke in New South Wales, Burnie in Tasmania, the Far West Region of South Australia (including Ceduna) and Tennant Creek in the Northern Territory.

The Government values the Australian Local Government Association's commitment to tackling complex social issues in Australia through place-based collective impact, and recognises the strength of this approach in enabling community driven resilience and response during the coronavirus crisis.

Motion 113 calls on the Federal and State Governments to increase funding for appropriate and accessible mental health services particularly within growth and interface areas.

Supporting mental health is among the Government's highest priorities. In addition to the Health portfolio's \$5.7 billion estimated expenditure on mental health in 2020-21, the Social Services portfolio also delivers a range of funding, programs and services that positively affect health and wellbeing, particularly for vulnerable Australians.

In the October 2020-21 Budget, the Government is providing \$45.7 million over four years from 2020-21 to expand the Individual Placement and Support program under the Youth Employment Strategy to assist vulnerable young people with mental illness to participate in the workforce.

As at 30 June 2020, there were 37,795 people with a primary psychosocial disability being supported under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) with committed supports averaging \$74,000 per participant. Commonwealth, state and territory governments and the National Disability Insurance Agency are working collaboratively to improve access to, and coordination of, supports for people with psychosocial disability in the NDIS and mainstream supports outside the NDIS.

Family Mental Health Support Services (FMHSS) is a child-focused family inclusive program providing early intervention and non-clinical supports for children and young people who are affected by, or at risk of, mental illness.

101 services across Australia are providing counselling, family interventions, peer support, home based support, education and skills development and community capacity building. In 2020-21, the Department of Social Services is providing \$42.850 million to 53 FMHSS providers across Australia. Providers are currently funded to 30 June 2021. Future arrangements for this program are connected to the broader directions for the Families and Children Activity.

The Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources (DISER) has provided the following information in relation to Motion 127 as these issues fall outside of my portfolio responsibility.

The Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010 (Premises Standards) is a legislative instrument made under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA). The Premises Standards aim to provide ‘people with disability’ with dignified and equitable access to buildings, and provide certainty to industry that they are complying with the DDA.

Schedule 1 of the Premises Standards, known as the Access Code, sets the performance requirements and technical specification for which a building certifier, building manager or building developer is required to comply to avoid access related discrimination.

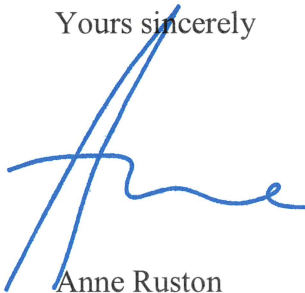
The Access Code is replicated in the National Construction Code and is enforced through state and territory building laws and regulations, which have constitutional authority for building regulations.

Enforcement of the Premises Standards is through the existing DDA complaints mechanism. The Australian Human Rights Commission has the power to investigate and conciliate complaints of unlawful discrimination on the grounds of disability.

DISER and the Attorney-General’s Department have policy responsibility for the Premises Standards.

In line with its legislative requirements, DISER has commenced its second five-year review of the Premises Standards. The review is a mechanism through which to consider changes to accessibility requirements for public buildings, including ground floor shopfronts, the provision of continuous accessible path of travel between pedestrian entrance and a new part of a building and where lessee concessions may apply

Yours sincerely



Anne Ruston

11 / 11 / 2020



The Hon. David Littleproud MP
Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management
Deputy Leader of the Nationals
Federal Member for Maranoa

Ref: MC20-012889

16 OCT 2020

Mayor David O'Loughlin
President
Australian Local Government Association
8 Geils Court
DEAKIN ACT 2600

Via email: alga@alga.asn.au

Dear Mayor O'Loughlin

Thank you for your letter of 21 August 2020 concerning motions submitted by your member Councils to the Australian Local Government Association for debate, which relate to my portfolio responsibilities. I appreciate the time you have taken to bring these matters to my attention. Please find following my response to the key areas of members' areas of interest.

Motions related to Agriculture

The Australian Government invests around \$1.1 billion a year in rural research and development (R&D) through the rural R&D corporations (RDCs), Cooperative Research Centres, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), universities, the R&D Tax Incentive and other programs. A key role of RDCs is to invest in R&D to address emerging issues, such as reduced water availability, for the industries they serve. AgriFutures Australia invests in R&D to support new and emerging industries, and to address challenges shared by multiple agricultural industries. Agrifutures Australia's Emerging National Rural Issues program is a key example of cross-RDC coordination and collaboration, alongside the National Farmers' Federation and the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, to address shared issues.

Although those involved in the agricultural innovation system, including local governments, are already delivering benefits from innovation to levy payers and the broader Australian community, there is more work to be done. This is why the government has announced an ambitious reform agenda that will modernise Australia's agricultural innovation system and deliver the transformational productivity gains needed to achieve a \$100 billion sector by 2030. To deliver this reform agenda, the government will:

- Develop a National Agricultural Innovation Policy Statement, which will include new ambitious, mission-oriented innovation priorities to stimulate investment and action on important cross-sectoral issues

- Develop a Digital Foundations for Agriculture Strategy to set the foundations for digital growth and opportunity across the sector
- Work with RDCs to deliver digital platforms that support uptake of innovation and commercialisation outcomes
- Scale up agricultural innovation hubs and precincts and work with industry to strengthen extension, adoption and commercialisation

For more information about the National Agricultural Innovation Agenda, visit agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/innovation/national-ag-innovation-agenda.

The government recognises the important role of Australia's farming, food processing and packaging industries play in food security. Due to the work of these industries we have an abundant supply of top quality fresh food produced from all parts of the country that ensures there will be plenty of food on the table, with over 90 per cent of fresh produce sold in Australia domestically grown. Our strong food security position will help industry reach the goal of a \$100 billion agriculture industry by 2030. A report released by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences on 17 April 2020 found Australia is one of the most food secure countries in the world. The report found that despite temporary shortages of some food items in supermarkets in March and April, caused by an unexpected surge in demand, Australia does not have a food security problem. Australia produces substantially more food than it consumes, exporting about 70 per cent of agricultural production.

The government's 2020-21 Budget demonstrates strong commitment to rural and regional Australia, and support for the farm sector's ambition of a \$100 billion industry by 2030. For more information, visit nationals.org.au/ag2030.

Motions related to Drought

The government is listening to farmers, small businesses and regional communities. Drought is an enduring, regular feature of the Australian landscape, and while it is not a natural disaster, its impacts can be disastrous. That is why the government continues to step up for farmers and regional communities across the three pillars of our long-term drought Response, Resilience and Preparedness Plan, committing more than \$10 billion in assistance for this drought, and for preparing Australia for future droughts. Managing drought requires a combined effort, and in 2018 the Australian, state, and territory governments signed the National Drought Agreement to create a collaborative environment for drought management.

The Future Drought Fund is an important part of the Government's Drought Response, Resilience and Preparedness Plan to deliver the support Australian farmers and communities need to be sustainable and productive. In 2020-21, eight foundational programs will be progressively rolled out delivering triple bottom line outcomes to build resilience to the impacts of drought and climate change. We are funding best practice business planning, information for decision-making, the adoption of research and technologies, and ways to improve the resilience of the soil and vegetation on which farmers depend. Communities will also benefit through improved regional planning, networks and leadership capabilities, and small-scale infrastructure projects. You can find more information regarding the Fund's current opportunities at agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought/future-drought-fund.

The government is taking immediate action to support those in drought. For example, through the Regional Investment Corporation over \$4 billion in concessional loans is being provided to assist farmers and regional small businesses. A range of initiatives are also supporting communities including a \$301 million commitment to the Drought Communities Programme Extension and funding for a drought-stream of the Building Better Regions Fund and targeted Roads to Recovery Projects. We are also supporting long-term resilience with \$5 billion committed to the Future Drought Fund to prepare Australia's farmers and regional communities for the next drought, including support for councils, small businesses and research and development. This expansion of government assistance will build capacity across our communities and build a more resilient Australia.

The 2020-21 Budget highlights the government's ongoing commitment to support drought affected farmers and communities.

Motions related to Emergency Management

I am pleased that the ALGA member councils appreciate the importance of well-coordinated efforts in meeting our collective responsibility to reduce the risk and impact of disasters and to build resilience at the national and local level. The government provides comprehensive support to the states including through the jointly funded Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements to help with the costs of providing relief and recovery assistance to disaster affected communities and the National Partnership Agreement on Disaster Risk Reduction to enable the delivery of risk reduction initiatives within jurisdictions.

I also note that the government, in response to recent unprecedented disaster events, established the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster which has heard evidence in relation to several of the issues raised in your letter. The government will consider recommendations arising from the Royal Commission following its scheduled conclusion on 28 October 2020.

The 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires were unprecedented in their scale and impact. Over 3,000 homes were destroyed, 33 lives lost, over 1 billion animals perished and 12 million hectares burnt. The unprecedented extent of the fires required a new approach to relief and recovery in Australia. On 6 January 2020, the Prime Minister, the Hon. Scott Morrison MP, announced the establishment of the National Bushfire Recovery Agency (NBRA), to co-ordinate national recovery and to partner with state and territory governments, charities and industry to support community recovery. In addition, more than \$2 billion has been provided to support bushfire recovery through the National Bushfire Recovery Fund. This is in addition to funding and support provided through existing disaster support funding mechanisms. The NBRA continues to work with industry groups, charities, local and state governments to ensure support is reaching those with the greatest need.

Flaxleaf fleabane is widely naturalised across Australia, and is a major cropping weed in southern Queensland and northern New South Wales. The weed has become resistant to herbicides such as glyphosate in some areas. State and territory governments and landholders are primarily responsible for the on-ground management of flaxleaf fleabane,

and the Australian Local Government Association should raise its concerns regarding the control of the weed in relation to the New South Wales Biosecurity Act and Weed Action program directly with the New South Wales Government.

The government provides leadership and coordination, and invests in research and development, to improve established weed management where it is in the national interest, including through the Established Pest Animals and Weeds Management Pipeline Program. For more information, visit agriculture.gov.au/pests-diseases-weeds/pest-animals-and-weeds.

The 2020-21 Budget highlights the government's ongoing commitment to support recovery from bushfires and other natural disasters, and to build resilience for future events

The government provided funding to AgriFutures Australia, through rounds 2 (\$6.2 million (2016-20)) and 4 (\$7.49 million (2019-22)) of the Rural R&D for Profit program, to support research into potential biological control agents for major weeds including flaxleaf fleabane. Flaxleaf fleabane was approved as a candidate for biological control by all jurisdictions in 2017. More information can be found at agrifutures.com.au.

Thank you for raising this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'D' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.

DAVID LITTLEPROUD MP



THE HON JASON WOOD MP
ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR CUSTOMS, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND
MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS

Ref No: MC20-025335

Mayor David O'Loughlin
President
Australian Local Government Association
8 Geils Court
DEAKIN ACT 2600

Dear Mayor

Thank you for your correspondence of 21 August 2020 concerning motions from councils relating to immigration, citizenship, migrant services and multicultural affairs. The Acting Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs, the Hon Alan Tudge MP, has asked that I respond on his behalf.

In regard to motion 101, Australia is committed to its international obligations set out in the *1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* and its 1967 Protocol and other international human rights conventions to which it is a party. Australia does not return individuals to situations where they face persecution or a real risk of torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, arbitrary deprivation of life or the application of the death penalty.

Individuals who arrive lawfully in Australia seeking asylum, who are found to engage Australia's *non-refoulement* (non-return) obligations may be granted permanent protection, subject to fulfilling relevant visa criteria and the health, character and security requirements that apply to all Australian visas.

Unlawful arrivals are only eligible for temporary protection if they are found to engage Australia's protection obligations. This upholds the Australian Government's commitment to process and recognise the protection claims of people who have arrived illegally, while at the same time guaranteeing that people smugglers do not have a 'permanent Protection visa product' to sell.

Immigration detention is part of strong border control and supports the integrity of Australia's migration program. In Australia, immigration detention is administrative not punitive. It helps manage temporary entry and permanent migration programs.

A person who does not hold a valid visa is an unlawful non-citizen, and must be detained under the *Migration Act 1958* (the Act). Whether the person is placed in an immigration detention facility (IDF), or other arrangements are made, is determined using a risk-based approach. The safety of the Australian community is an important factor in this decision.

Under the Act, detention is not limited by a set timeframe; rather, it ends when the person is either granted a visa or is removed from Australia. The timeframe associated with either of these events is dependent upon a number of factors, including identity determination, developments in country information, and the complexity of processing due to individual circumstances relating to health, character or security matters. These assessments are completed as expeditiously as possible to facilitate the shortest possible timeframe for detaining people in IDFs.

Most unlawful non-citizens are released from immigration detention by being granted bridging visas that enable them to live in the community while they await a visa or review decision, or make arrangements to depart Australia. Individuals on a bridging visa with work rights, and who have the capacity to work, are expected to support themselves while their immigration status is being resolved.

Asylum seekers granted a bridging visa may also have access to a range of Government services. This includes Medicare and the public health system, education for school-aged children, assistance with finding employment (if they have work rights), and the Government's Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) program, if eligible.

The SRSS Program provides support for certain non-citizens who are in the Australian community temporarily while their immigration status is being determined. SRSS provides short-term, tailored support to individuals who are unable to support themselves while they engage with the Department of Home Affairs to resolve their immigration status. Tiered services are provided to address barriers that may impede an individual's ability to resolve their immigration status – either the grant of a substantive visa or departure from Australia.

In regard to motion 104, the Commonwealth Coordinator General for Migrant Services was appointed in December 2019 within the Department to provide national leadership and drive better settlement outcomes for refugees and migrants with a focus on employment, English language acquisition and community integration. The Coordinator-General and her Office are building relationships and working closely with federal departments, state and territory governments, industry, the community sector and refugees and migrants and are working collaboratively with other Commonwealth Government agencies to develop a more rigorous approach to defining and measuring settlement outcomes for refugees, humanitarian entrants and other migrants with specific settlement assistance needs.

In regard to motion 107, the Government acknowledges the importance that local government councils play in hosting citizenship ceremonies on behalf of the Department. This longstanding arrangement is highly valued by the Government, as local government councils continue to be the most appropriate organisations to hold ceremonies and provide a formal, local welcome to their newest citizens.

While local government councils do not receive direct funding from the Department to conduct citizenship ceremonies, the Government (through the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications) provides Financial Assistance Grants to local government under the *Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995*.

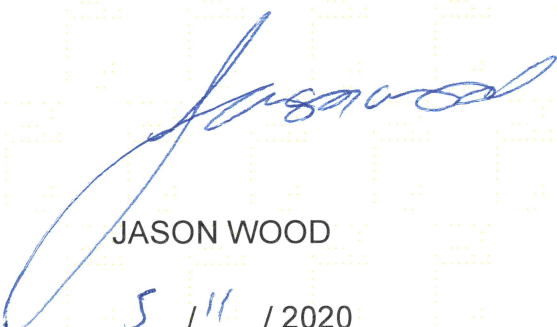
The grants are paid to state and territory governments according to population, for immediate distribution to local governing bodies. The grants are untied in the hands of local government, allowing councils to spend the grants in accordance with local priorities. Although citizenship legislation specifies certain mandatory requirements for the conduct of citizenship ceremonies, they are minimal in nature. The provision of gifts and social elements, such as music and refreshments, are at the discretion of each council.

The Department continues to work with local government councils in supporting the reduction of their on-hand caseloads. Due to the risks and restrictions associated with providing in-person ceremonies as a result of COVID-19, the Department implemented online ceremonies from 31 March 2020. This has resulted in a reduced number of approved applicants awaiting ceremony, from the peak of 97,966 people in the week ending 24 April 2020, to 22,403 people as at 31 August 2020, a reduction of 75,252 people (77 per cent). The ability for local government councils to ensure new citizens are conferred in a timely manner will be greatly assisted by this measure.

The Department's citizenship ceremonies teams in each jurisdiction undertake regular contact with local government councils, and have been working with councils to support their transition back to in-person ceremonies where COVIDSafe requirements can be met.

Thank you for raising these matters.

Yours sincerely



JASON WOOD

5 / 11 / 2020



SENATOR THE HON. JONATHON DUNIAM

Assistant Minister for Forestry and Fisheries
Assistant Minister for Regional Tourism
Deputy Manager of Government Business in the Senate
Liberal Senator for Tasmania

MC20-000719

Mayor David O'Loughlin
President
Australian Local Government Association
8 Geils Court
DEAKIN ACT 2600

Dear Mayor O'Loughlin

Thank you for your letter of 21 August 2020 to Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment regarding a motion submitted by a council(s) to the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) for debate at ALGA's National General Assembly (NGA). Minister Birmingham has asked me to reply on his behalf, and I apologise for my delay in responding to you.

I note the cancellation of this year's NGA because of COVID-19, and that the ALGA Board agreed that motions of strong community concern, where appropriate, should be referred to the Australian Government. I note also that you have informed the council(s) who submitted motions, that you have referred a motion to Minister Birmingham and that your intention is to publish my response on the ALGA website to inform discussion at the 2021 NGA.

The Australian Government's priority since the emergence of the pandemic has been to protect the health of all Australians. Measures put in place to suppress the virus, such as travel restrictions, social distancing and limits on social gatherings, have largely been successful in flattening the curve and slowing the growth of cases in Australia. Various flare-ups show the importance of continued discipline and vigilance. The task now is to ensure Australians can return to work in a COVID-safe workplace.

COVID-19 has resulted in the most severe global economic crisis since the Great Depression. In response, the Morrison Government committed unprecedented support, saving lives, cushioning the blow and helping Australians remain in work. Our Economic Recovery Plan, outlined in the October Budget, will create jobs, rebuild our economy and secure Australia's future. In addition to the Government's unprecedented support measures such as JobSeeker and JobKeeper payments, the October Budget committed an additional \$25 billion in direct COVID-19 response measures, as well as our \$74 billion JobMaker plan to ensure Australians can get back to work as soon as it is safe to do so.

As the Assistant Minister for Regional Tourism, I am acutely aware of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism industry. The industry was affected early with the onset of COVID-19 through the closure of international borders, and then with domestic movement and travel restrictions. I also recognise the industry will be one of the last to fully emerge from the crisis as it will be some time before international borders fully re-open. That is why the Government has responded comprehensively with whole of economy measures and also with targeted measures for the tourism industry recognising that it was disproportionately affected by the pandemic.

The motion you have referred to me calls on the (State and) Commonwealth Governments to provide effective support to Councils dealing with high visitation impacts on iconic Australian destinations, by exploring additional funding support and/or revenue raising initiatives that can be used to help meet the costs of servicing visitation and improving the sustainability of these areas.

You would be aware that since you wrote the Government has made a number of significant announcements of support for the tourism industry, which have positive implications for local government in terms of bringing visitors back to regions and improving sustainability of areas, providing businesses and governments at all levels with more revenue which may be directed towards local costs of servicing visitors.

In the October Budget, the Morrison Government announced the next phase of our tourism recovery plan, with over \$400 million dollars of support directly targeted to tourism recovery, including providing record funding to Tourism Australia. This is in addition to a suite of measures that will benefit the tourism industry, including the JobMaker hiring credit, tax cuts for over 11 million Australians, and a cash flow boost for companies with a turnover up to \$5 billion by allowing them to temporarily, up to June 2022, offset tax losses against previous profits and tax paid in or after 2018-19 through a temporary loss carry back.

As part of the 2020-21 Budget measures, the Government announced the \$50 million Recovery for Regional Tourism Fund to support nine tourism regions which are heavily reliant on international tourism. The Recovery for Regional Tourism program will help businesses in these regions to retain and create jobs by driving visitation, spurring demand and improving product diversity to attract visitors. This will help regions achieve greater leverage from the domestic tourism market and to ensure there is a vibrant, internationally focused tourism industry still in place when international visitors return.

Also, as part of the Budget, the Government announced an additional round of the Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF). This round provides \$200 million for projects to boost local infrastructure in regional communities, \$100 million of which will be dedicated to tourism-related infrastructure, delivering targeted support for regional tourism. This BBRF round is expected to open late this year.

A range of projects funded under the \$1 billion COVID-19 Relief and Recovery Fund have also assisted in maintaining regional tourism attractions, boosting tourism visitation and preserving Australia's environment as part of the Government's economic recovery plan. Similarly, funding under the \$76 million Regional Tourism Bushfire Recovery Package has continued to provide assistance to those regions affected by the summer bushfires.

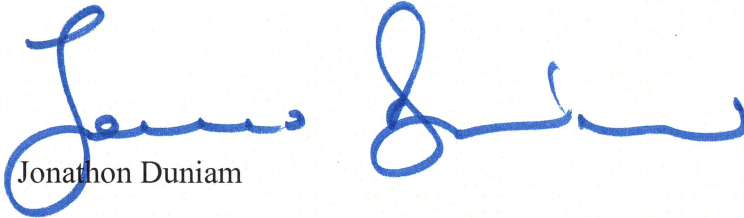
In partnership with industry and state and territory governments, we are continuing to deliver our plan to fight the virus and protect lives, while helping businesses through the economic impacts, and seeking to build confidence and momentum in our economy to come out of this pandemic in as strong a position as possible.

Our aim, which accords with and supports the motion, is to provide effective targeted support to regional Australia which will improve the long term sustainability of these areas, including those local governments dealing with the impacts of high visitation on iconic destinations.

Our tourism industry is incredibly resilient and has bounced back in the past from other crises. I have no doubt that will be the case again, even in these unprecedented times.

Thank you again for your letter and for sharing the motion from your ALGA member council(s).

Yours sincerely


Jonathon Duniam
17 / 11 /2020



Senator the Hon Marise Payne
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for Women

MC20-007016

Mayor David O'Loughlin
President
Australian Local Government Association
8 Geils Court
DEAKIN ACT 2600

Dear Mayor

Thank you for your letter regarding the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

Australia is strongly committed to continue our work toward the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons. Achieving this will require painstaking efforts over a number of years.

Australia actively engages in pragmatic and effective steps to advance nuclear disarmament. These include: strengthening the cornerstone Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT); working with States on nuclear disarmament verification, risk reduction, and transparency measures; encouraging arms control talks among those in possession of nuclear weapons; and promoting entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

The Australian Government considers that the TPNW does not amount to an effective measure to pursue non-proliferation and disarmament, and is not in Australia's interests. The TPNW was negotiated without the involvement of a single country in possession of the weapons it seeks to eliminate and none proposes to ratify the treaty. The Treaty has deepened divisions between nuclear weapon and non-nuclear weapon states, arguably making disarmament more difficult. The Treaty risks undermining the NPT and the Government further considers it incompatible with our US alliance arrangements.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Marise Payne', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

MARISE PAYNE

30 NOV 2020



13 OCT 2020

Senator the Hon Marise Payne
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for Women

PDR: MC20-129310

Mayor David O'Loughlin
President
Australian Local Government Association
8 Geils Court
DEAKIN ACT 2600

Dear Mayor O'Loughlin

Thank you for your letter regarding council motions submitted for debate at your National General Assembly. I am sorry to hear your assembly was cancelled.

I am encouraged to see local councils supporting women and girls' leadership aspirations and participation in sport and recreation.

The Office for Women delivers projects under the Women's Leadership and Development Program (WLDP) to improve outcomes for women across five key areas, including: economic security; workforce participation; leadership; safety; and international engagement.

With respect to Motion 109, it may interest you to know that Local Government Professionals Australia received a WLDP grant for \$90,000 (GST ex.) in June 2020, to deliver a program to support women working in local government. There are currently no further grant opportunities available under the WLDP, but I encourage interested councils to register for updates on the WLDP at GrantConnect www.grants.gov.au.

I note you have sent Motion 108 to my colleague Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck. Senator Colbeck will respond to the motion in his role as Minister for Youth and Sport.

I hope this letter assists to inform a productive National General Assembly in 2021.

Yours sincerely

MARISE PAYNE

Cc: Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, Minister for Youth and Sport



THE HON MARK COULTON MP

Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications and Local Government
Federal Member for Parkes

Ref: MC20-006893

Cr Linda Scott
President
Australian Local Government Association
8 Geils Court
DEAKIN ACT 2600

18 MAR 2021

Dear Cr Scott

I am writing in response to a letter of 21 August 2020 from the then President, Mayor David O'Loughlin, bringing to my attention motions from councils. I apologise for my delay in responding.

I note the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development, the Hon Michael McCormack MP has responded separately about motions relating to his transport and infrastructure portfolio.

It is disappointing that the COVID-19 pandemic forced the cancellation of the National General Assembly. It would have been a key opportunity for stakeholders from every jurisdiction to share their ideas for improving the local government sector and to discuss the lessons they have learned in the past year. However, I'm glad we were able to catch up in person at the Roads Congress in Wagga Wagga. It was a great opportunity for a frank exchange of priorities.

I am pleased to report in the last financial year \$3.7 billion was provided to local governments. Most of this was untied so councils could allocate funding to their own priorities, including \$2.5 billion through the Financial Assistance Grant Program and over \$1.2 billion in program funding for local infrastructure, drought and bushfire relief. These payments to local governments exceeded 1 per cent of the Commonwealth tax take available.

Thank you for the time taken to bring to my attention the motions submitted by councils that fall within my portfolio responsibilities.

I trust my responses will be of interest to your members.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Coultun', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Mark Coultun MP

Responses to 2020 National General Assembly of Local Government Motions

Motion 1

Councils call on the State and Commonwealth Governments to provide effective support to Councils dealing with high visitation impacts on iconic Australian destinations by exploring additional funding support and/or revenue raising initiatives that can be used to help meet the costs of servicing visitation and improving the sustainability of these areas.

Response

The Australian Government is committed to working with state, territory, and local governments to explore potential financing options to support the costs of servicing visitation and improving the sustainability of iconic Australian destinations. I would be particularly interested in seeing case studies from councils that maintain infrastructure to support the amenity of these assets where it is not feasible or where it would be inequitable to set fees or charges for the use of that infrastructure to cover the costs of its maintenance.

The 2020-21 Budget confirms the Australian Government's steadfast commitment to supporting and working with the local government sector, delivering a record investment in and via the sector. Councils will receive a further \$1.24 billion in untied funding this year via the Financial Assistance Grant program, on top of the \$1.32 billion pre-payment paid in May 2020. This funding is untied in the hands of local governments, which means it could be allocated to council's local priorities.

The Australian Government also established a new \$500 million Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program that will enable local councils to deliver on priority projects, with a focus on priority upgrades and maintenance of local roads and community infrastructure. In the 2020-21 Budget, the Commonwealth committed an additional \$1 billion to this program.

The Government is providing an additional \$200 million for Round 5 of the Building Better Regions Fund, including \$100 million for tourism related infrastructure projects, and a further \$22.7 million for another round of the Stronger Communities Programme. These programs provide funding for a range of locally-driven projects that aim to strengthen our regions, their economies and the vibrant communities which characterise them.

Where local governments are the custodians of iconic Australian destinations, they can use funding from these programs to meet costs associated with servicing the visitors and improving the sustainability of these attractions.

This funding builds upon previous rounds of the successful BBRF program which has seen \$841.6 million support the Government's commitment to create jobs, drive economic growth and build stronger regional communities.

I also note on 9 November 2020, the Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment, announced the third round of the Australian Heritage Funding Grants Program that will place a particular focus on conserving national heritage places, many of which have faced significant visitor downturn and temporary closure during the COVID-19 pandemic. Heritage site owners, managers and support organisations are invited to apply for grants of between \$25,000 and \$400,000 as Australians focus more and more on domestic tourism opportunities.

I am pleased to advise that both local and state governments are eligible to apply for this funding and I strongly encourage your members to test their eligibility for this timely support. More information is available at www.business.gov.au/grants-and-programs/australian-heritage-grants.

Motion 17

Councils call on the Australian Government to commit to the recommendations of the “2018 Regional Telecommunications Review” as published by the Regional Telecommunications Review committee.

Response

The Australian Government announced its response to the recommendations of the 2018 Regional Telecommunications Review in March 2019.¹

As part of this response, the Government is investing \$220 million in regional communications through the Stronger Regional Digital Connectivity Package. The Package includes:

- \$160 million for additional rounds of the highly successful Mobile Black Spot Program;
- \$53 million for a new Regional Connectivity Program which will provide grants to address local telecommunications priorities in regional areas;
- a Regional Tech Hub to help regional Australians to get connected and stay connected; and
- measures to develop the Universal Service Guarantee (USG), including trials of alternative technologies to provide voice services in more remote areas, and expert advice on ways to deliver the USG in the future.

The application process for the latest round of Mobile Black Spot Program, Round 5A, opened on 18 November 2020 with applications from mobile network operators and infrastructure providers due by 5 March 2021. The process for Round 6 is expected to commence after the Round 5A competitive assessment process is complete.

Given the significant level of interest shown in the Regional Connectivity Program, the Government allocated an additional \$30 million to the program as part of the 2020-21 Budget. This means there is now up to \$83 million in grant funding available under the program. The application period for the Regional Connectivity Program closed on 17 November 2020, with the outcomes anticipated to be finalised in March 2021.

The National Farmers’ Federation, which was successful through a competitive tender process, developed and operate is operating the Regional Tech Hub. The Hub includes a website, social media and a staffed phone support line that operates five days a week. The Regional Tech Hub was launched in December 2020.

The Alternative Voice Service Trials will be used to identify and test better ways to deliver voice services in regional and remote areas. The Government has awarded grants to six organisations to conduct these trials, which will take place across regional Australia over the next 12-15 months.

The creation of the National Broadband Network (NBN) regional business unit also delivers a key recommendation from the 2018 Regional Telecommunications Review, which was to establish a dedicated unit focused on delivering NBN benefits for regional Australians.

¹ www.communications.gov.au/publications/australian-government-response-2018-regional-telecommunications-independent-committee-report-2018

Motion 83

That Councils call on the Federal and State Governments to encourage all levels of government to work collaboratively to establish new models and incentive plans/packages to attract and retain a sustainable health workforce for regional, rural and remote areas.

Response

The Australian Government is taking action to attract and retain a sustainable health workforce for regional, rural and remote areas, including new models of care. In the 2018-19 Budget, the Australian Government announced the \$550 million Stronger Rural Health Strategy, a carefully calibrated suite of measures to address each stage of medical workforce supply: teaching; training; and retention.

In the 2019-20 Budget, the Government committed \$62.2 million to develop a National Rural Generalist Pathway. The Pathway will attract, train and support doctors who provide primary and emergency care, and other services such as mental health care in regional, rural and remote communities.

The Government is also working with a range of organisations including Local Health Districts (LHDs), Rural Workforce Agencies (RWAs) and Primary Health Networks (PHNs) to support the development of proposals to trial innovative models of care. Current work is focusing on identifying the requirements for implementation such as suitable sites; legislative barriers; patient needs, and workforce gaps to be addressed by the new models; and existing and additional funding requirements.

Motion 110

Councils call on the Federal Government, and in particular the Minister for Local Government, for an increase in the Financial Assistance Grants to support local governments to deliver a range of services including roads maintenance.

Response

Local Government is a valued partner of the Australian Government and the 2020-21 Budget confirms our steadfast commitment to supporting and working with the sector, delivering a record investment with every council in Australia.

Under the Financial Assistance Grant Program, the Commonwealth pre-paid \$1.32 billion in May 2020, and will pay the remaining \$1.24 billion throughout 2020-21. The Financial Assistance Grant Program is the main mechanism of support provided by the Government to local governments. Since 1974-75, \$58 billion in untied funding has been provided to local governments. In 2020-21 local governments will receive the highest allocation of Financial Assistance Grants funding - an increase by \$50 million over the 2019-20 allocation.

Further support for the local government sector was delivered in May 2020 through the \$500 million Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program that enabled local councils to deliver on priority projects, with a focus on priority upgrades and maintenance of local roads and community assets. The LRCI program received a significant boost in the 2020-21 Budget with an additional \$1 billion allocation. The program will support thousands of direct and indirect jobs and will drive shovel-ready local priorities, supporting locals jobs, local business and local procurement.

As part of the Local and State Government Road Safety Package, the Australian Government has committed an additional \$100 million per year to the Roads to Recovery program from 2019-20, bringing the total commitment to the program from 2013-14 to 2023-24 to \$6.2 billion, and an ongoing record commitment of \$500 million for each year following to fund local road maintenance and upgrades.

Road crashes are a major cost to Australians every year. Black Spot projects target those road locations where crashes are occurring. The Black Spot Program reduces the risk of crashes by funding measures such as traffic signals and roundabouts at dangerous locations.

The Australian Government is investing an additional \$50 million a year to the Black Spot Program from 2019–20 through the Local and State Government Road Safety Package, bringing the total funding to \$1.1 billion from 2013-2014 to 2023-24, with an ongoing commitment of \$110 million for each year following.

Motion 123

Councils call on the Federal Government to establish National Data Standards to enable more efficient and effective reporting of local government data and to ensure that comparisons can be made on the same data assumptions across all states and councils.

Response

The Australian Government recognises the importance of National Data Standards and its significance. In the 2020-21 Budget, the Australian Government has invested \$13.7 million over four years commencing in 2020-21 for the Better Data Use to Support Delivery for Regional Australians program. This program will provide government and community decision-makers with better economic, social and demographical data on regional Australia.

Motion 130

Councils call on the Australian Government to dedicate funds to increase drug and alcohol treatment and rehabilitation options in rural and regional areas, as a matter of priority.

Response

Drug and Alcohol Program:

The Australian Government is taking action to reduce drug and alcohol-related harm. The Australian Government has committed more than \$800 million over four years (from 1 July 2018) to reduce the impact of drug and alcohol misuse on individuals, families and communities through the overarching Drug and Alcohol Program. Of this investment, \$660 million is provided for treatment services and national leadership.

In addition, as part of the 2019–20 Whole-of-Government Drug Strategy Budget Measure, the Australian Government invested \$9.5 million over two years (from 2019–20) to ‘Increase access to drug and alcohol treatment services in regional, rural and remote areas’.

Local Drug Action Team Program:

The Australian Government is providing nearly \$10 million to the Local Drug Action Team (LDAT) Program over 2020–21 to 2021–22, taking total Government investment in the LDAT

Program to more than \$29 million since 2016–17. This is a direct investment into local communities, supporting locally-led action to target local community needs.

There are currently 239 active LDATs across Australia delivering primary prevention and health promotion programs, with the aim of building protective factors and reducing risk factors for drug and alcohol harms in communities. LDATs develop Community Action Plans targeted to the needs of the local community in partnership with local community organisations such as schools, local police, local government agencies and non-government organisations.

The next LDAT recruitment round will be undertaken in early 2021, bringing another 40 LDATs into the Program and building on the progress being made in community primary prevention by existing LDATs.

Motion 132

Councils call on the Australian Government to hold a referendum to amend the Constitution to recognise local government as an important, legitimate and essential element in Australia's system of government.

Response

The Australian Government acknowledges the interest from some segments in the community for a referendum on the recognition of local government in the Australian Constitution.

As you are aware, local government is a creature of state constitutions. Referenda on the inclusion of local government in the Constitution took place in 1974 and 1988, however both attempts were unsuccessful.

Renewed discussion about including local government in the Australian Constitution is welcomed. However, as previous attempts showed, success will rely on positive engagement and careful planning before any question is put to the Australian people.

Motion 134

Councils call on the Australian Government to utilise its powers under section 51 of the Australian Constitution to ensure that all remote and regional areas of Australia have access to alternative, robust and reliable telecommunications separate to the services provided by Telstra.

Response

The new Universal Service Guarantee (USG) provides for access to broadband services, as well as telephone and payphone services provided by Telstra under the old Universal Service Obligation (USO). Under the USG, NBN Co is the default wholesale broadband provider for all of Australia, and must also support voice services on its fixed line and fixed wireless networks.

With the volume NBN rollout now complete, consumers and businesses across Australia can now access fixed broadband services from numerous broadband retailers. The USG is backed up by new statutory infrastructure provider laws that took effect on 1 July 2020.

The Government is working with consumers and industry to see if there are better ways to deliver USG services over the long term. Beyond these baseline USG protections, the majority of people in regional, rural and remote Australia have access to alternatives to Telstra and the NBN, in the form of competing commercial mobile, wireless or satellite networks, if they wish to avail themselves of them, noting these are cost-effective and realistic technologies to service less populous areas.

The Government has a range of programs like the Mobile Black Spot Program, the Regional Connectivity Program and the Alternative Voice Services Trials to further encourage the provision of telecommunications services.

Motion 146

Councils call on the Australian Government to provide funding for local governments to audit and maintain data on their infrastructure asset base.

Response

The Government's support for councils includes both general funding and project-specific to deliver targeted infrastructure outcomes in many asset groups including roads, bridges, building and facilities, parks and recreation, stormwater, waste and wastewater and airports. The Government recognises the importance of infrastructure asset bases, including appropriate audit and maintenance of such systems. However, while the Government contributes significantly to the funding of local government assets, the associated audit and maintenance of data processes is primarily a matter for state, territory and local governments. Australian Government funding, such as Financial Assistance Grants, can already be used for this purpose.

Motion 147

Councils call on the Australian Federal Government to pursue the enhancement of NBN services to rural and remote Australia.

Response

The Australian Government supports ongoing improvements in the NBN services provided to rural and remote Australia.

In October 2019, NBN Co established a new regional business unit, led by a member of NBN Co's senior management team, which encompasses the fixed wireless and satellite networks, as well as other customer facing functions. NBN fixed line services are available to 73 per cent of premises outside major areas in Australia.

The establishment of the regional business unit is an important signal to regional and rural communities that NBN Co will continue to improve its services so that all Australians can maximise the immense social and economic benefits that high-speed broadband can provide.

NBN Co continues to improve the service quality and products available over the network:

- between January 2019 and December 2020, the company completed 2,799 fixed wireless tower upgrades to increase fixed wireless network capacity;
- in April 2020, the company enhanced its Sky Muster Plus satellite offering by reducing the range of applications that are metered. This resulted in the amount of data unmetered on the product increasing from 30 per cent to 70 per cent;

- the Business Satellite Service was launched in October 2019 providing products tailored to the needs of medium to large enterprises; and
- in September 2020, the company announced a number of upgrades to NBN services including:
 - new investments in fixed-line upgrades encompassing upgrading 75 per cent of fixed line premises across Australia so they can access ultrafast broadband of up to 1 Gigabit per second (Gbps) by 2023, as well as \$50 million for a line speed upgrade program available to resolve in-home cabling issues from premises on the FTTN network;
 - the creation of 240 Business Fibre Zones to extend ultrafast connectivity to 90 per cent of all Australian businesses at no up-front cost, as well as \$50 million for the creation of future Business Fibre Zones, in partnership with local government and other organisations;
 - a \$300 million fund, which it will use to co-invest with federal, state and territory governments and local councils to deliver access to higher speed wholesale broadband services over the NBN to households and businesses in regional and remote areas of Australia. It is expected this fund will assist in moving more regional areas from fixed wireless or satellite to a fixed line NBN access technology; and
 - an annual investment of around \$200 million in increasing the capacity of the fixed wireless network.



The Hon Michael McCormack MP

**Deputy Prime Minister
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development
Leader of The Nationals
Federal Member for Riverina**

Ref: MC20-006972

29 OCT 2020

Mayor David O'Loughlin
President
Australian Local Government Association
8 Geils Court
DEAKIN ACT 2600

David
Dear Mayor

Thank you for your letter of 21 August 2020 detailing motions from Australian councils which relate to my portfolio. I note you have also written to the Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications and Local Government, the Hon Mark Coulton MP, about motions related to his portfolio. Please note Minister Coulton will respond separately.

The National General Assembly of Local Government is an important event, bringing together key stakeholders to share ideas and experiences to improve the productivity of the local government sector. It is unfortunate that this year's National General Assembly had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, I welcome the opportunity to respond to the motions submitted by councils.

I appreciate the time you have taken to bring these matters to my attention and I am pleased to provide you with the enclosed responses to the motions relevant to my portfolio.

Thank you again for taking the time to write to me on this matter.

Yours sincerely

Michael McCormack

Michael McCormack

Responses to the National General Assembly of Local Government Motions

Motion 25, 36 and 44

That Councils call upon

- 1. The Federal Government to recognise an increased uptake in walking/hiking in natural areas nationally would result in financial benefits and improved health and wellbeing for Australians as well as enabling greater economic growth, productivity, social and environmental benefits.*
- 2. The Federal Government in consultation with State, Territory and Local Government authorities, to allocate funding for a fifth round of the Building Better Regions Funding (BBRF) (or alternate funding source) to a national infrastructure project to link up the gaps in existing walking paths/trails in both cities and the regions.*

Response

The Australian Government acknowledges the value of providing funding for walking/hiking trails in natural areas and has provided funding for this purpose including:

- \$10 million under the Regional Growth Fund for the Construction of the Rivers and Ridges Yarra Ranges Trails in Victoria;
- \$3 million for the completion of the Three Capes Track in Tasmania under the Community Development Grants Programme; and
- \$1.45 million to complete the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail in Queensland under the Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF).

The Government is providing an additional \$200 million for round five of the BBRF, including \$100 million for tourism related infrastructure projects, and a further \$22.7 million for another round of the Stronger Communities Programme. These programs provide funding for a range of locally-driven projects that aim to strengthen our regions, their economies and the vibrant communities which characterised them.

The BBRF may be an appropriate program for the Australian Local Government Association members to consider when seeking funding for the projects to better connect existing walking paths/trails across regional Australia. It is a highly competitive grant program, with the volume and value of grant applications regularly exceeding available funding within all BBRF grant rounds. To date, across the Four Rounds of the BBRF, 20 projects have been funded to construct or enhance bike/walking recreational trails to a combined total of just over \$13 million.

Motion 28

That Councils commend the Federal Government for Blackspot and Road to Recovery Programs and urge that those valuable programs to be continued.

Response

The Roads to Recovery program forms a key partnership between the Australian Government and local government in delivering the vital infrastructure required to grow and strengthen our economy. The Australian Government demonstrated its ongoing commitment to this important partnership by removing the sunset clause for the Roads to Recovery program in the *National Land Transport Act 2014*, meaning no new legislation will be required for the continuation of the program.

As part of the Local and State Government Road Safety Package, the Australian Government has committed an additional \$100 million per year to the Roads to Recovery program from 2019-20, bringing the total commitment to the program from 2013-14 to 2023-24 to \$6.2 billion, and an ongoing commitment of \$500 million for each year following.

Road crashes are a major cost to Australians every year. Black Spot projects target those road locations where crashes are occurring. The Black Spot Program reduces the risk of crashes by funding measures such as traffic signals and roundabouts at dangerous locations.

The Australian Government is investing an additional \$50 million a year to the Black Spot Program from 2019–20 through the Local and State Government Road Safety Package, bringing the total funding to \$1.1 billion from 2013-2014 to 2023-24, with an ongoing commitment of \$110 million for each year following.

Motion 53

To assist in tackling rising emissions from transport, Councils call on the Federal Government to reverse this rise in the transport sector through:

- a. Promotion and support for a shift to electric cars, buses and trucks, and rail electrification, powered by renewable energy; solar, wind, hydrogen;*
- b. Adoption of electric vehicle targets & further expanding charging facilities;*
- c. Mandatory greenhouse gas emission (GGE) standards for cars and other vehicles;*
- d. Promotion and support for active transport – walking and cycling.*

Response

The Australian Government's goal is to encourage cleaner, more affordable cars that use less fuel, as this means cheaper bills for families and is better for our health and the environment. New vehicle technologies will help, while also offering greater choice and safety for Australian motorists. However, uptake must be driven by consumer demand, rather than regulation that will restrict consumer choice.

The Government will not introduce a mandatory fuel efficiency standard that could increase the upfront cost of new vehicles for Australians. The Government wants a sensible approach that places fuel savings for the community front and centre, but ensures the vehicles that Australians value remain in the market. Vehicle manufacturers, through the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries, have also recently introduced a voluntary fuel efficiency standard for its members, which account for 99 per cent of light vehicle sales in Australia, from 2020.

On 25 February 2019, the Government announced it would develop a national strategy to plan and manage the transition to new vehicle technologies and infrastructure. This strategy is part of the Government's Climate Solutions Package, a \$3.5 billion investment to deliver on Australia's 2030 emission reduction targets. This strategy will build on existing Government support for new vehicle technologies, which includes:

- \$74.5 million for the Future Fuels Package to help businesses incorporate vehicles that use electricity, hydrogen or biofuels into their fleets;
- \$24.9 million for a Freight Energy Productivity Program that aims to increase the use of new truck technology to improve fuel efficiency and increase productivity in the road freight sector;

- \$21 million of funding for charging infrastructure from the Australian Renewable Energy Agency to roll out ultra-fast charging sites through two networks along Australia's national highways;
- Up to \$1.1 billion in finance available from the Clean Energy Finance Corporation to assist uptake of low and zero emissions vehicles; and
- \$25 million for the Future Battery Industries Cooperative Research Centre.

Motion 69

Councils call on the Federal Government to provide sustainable funding that will allow Councils to strategically plan for the maintenance, to all-weather standard local roads, that form essential 'first and last mile' links in modern logistics chains for agriculture and other time-sensitive goods. Further, that such funding be based on the productivity benefits of improved logistics together with an assessment of the benefits of a shift to rail, in particular to the Inland Rail project.

Response

The 2020-21 Budget confirms the Australian Government's steadfast commitment to supporting and working with the local government sector, delivering a record investment in and via the sector.

Councils will receive a further \$1.24 billion in untied funding this year via the Financial Assistance Grant program, on top of the \$1.32 billion pre-payment paid in May 2020. This funding is untied in the hands of local governments, which means it could be allocated to council's local priorities.

Funding is also available to state/territories and local governments through the Government's Bridges Renewal Program (BRP). The Program provides funding for the upgrade and replacement of bridges that will enhance access for local communities or higher productivity vehicles. The Government is providing \$676 million in funding to the BRP from 2015-16 to 2023-24, with an ongoing commitment of over \$550 million from 2024-25 to 2029-30.

Conversely, the Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program (HVSPP) is an Australian Government initiative to fund infrastructure projects that improve the productivity and safety outcomes of heavy vehicle operations across Australia. The Government is providing \$538 million from 2013-14 to 2023-24, with an ongoing commitment of over \$400 million from 2024-25 to 2029-30. While no date has been set for the opening of either BRP Round Six or HVSPP Round Eight, interested parties are encouraged to monitor the Department's Website at www.investment.infrastructure.gov.au.

Motion 82

That further funding be allocated to rural and remote Councils to address upgrade of aerodrome facilities to support linkages between larger international ports and rural and remote areas.

Response

Through the Remote Airstrip Upgrade Program, the Australian Government has provided \$62 million for almost 300 projects since 2013 to enhance the safety and accessibility of airstrips in remote areas of Australia. Applications for round eight of the program are open until 12 November 2020, with local governments in this round able to apply for 100 per cent of their eligible project costs for small projects of \$150,000 or less.

The \$100 million Regional Airports Program also supports airport infrastructure upgrades to improve safety and access in regional Australia. In June 2020, the Government announced 61 projects at a cost of \$41.2 million as part of round one of the program. A second funding round is anticipated later in 2020.

Motion 89

Councils call on the Federal Government to expand and increase the funding of the Roads of Strategic Importance initiative (ROSI) by focusing on rural regions hit by the 2019/2020 bushfires and floods. This funding will enable fire and flood ravaged communities to upgrade freight and road corridors to fund bridge and culvert upgrades, road sealing, strengthening and widening, creating a more reliable and safer road network and facilitate tourism opportunities which will assist the economic recovery of fire and flood ravaged rural communities. This will assist Council's work with isolated communities. East Gippsland Shire Council nominates the Princes Highway as roads of strategic importance that require that should be the focus of this funding.

Response

Through the 10 year \$100 billion transport infrastructure pipeline, the Australian Government is already investing in road upgrades in regional Australia, including the Gippsland region. A focus of the program in the Gippsland region is upgrades to the Princes Highway, including the duplication of the highway between Traralgon to Sale and upgrades from Sale to the New South Wales border.

On 6 July, the Government announced further funding for road infrastructure projects in Victoria, including an additional \$70.6 million to complete the duplication of the Princes Highway between Traralgon and Sale.

Motion 115

Councils call on the Federal and State Governments for increased funding to plan for and ease congestion in and across growth areas.

Response

The Australian Government has funded the Urban Congestion Fund (UCF), a \$4.8 billion program to address pinch points and congestion in our major cities and suburbs.

The UCF projects will help commuters get home sooner and safer by:

- reducing travel times
- reducing vehicle operating costs
- delivering a more reliable road network for commuters and freight
- encouraging greater use of public transport through upgrading commuter car parks
- addressing local bottlenecks.

We are working to ensure that state governments and local councils carry out the planning and delivery as quickly as possible.

Motion 116

Councils call on the Federal Government to seek action to remove redundant aerial service authority cables in road reserves to improve visual impact.

Response

The Australian Government acknowledges community concerns about the visual impact of redundant aerial service authority cables in road reserves. However, infrastructure relating to aerial service authority cables is a matter for state and territory governments.

Further information on the management and maintenance of this infrastructure are best directed to state governments.

Motion 124

Councils call on the Australian Government

- *Commit to the creation of a Federal public transport funding stream for the states.*
- *Invest in research to build technologies in the area of low and zero carbon public transport infrastructure for Australian cities and towns.*
- *Commit to Australian built public transport rolling stock and associated infrastructure.*
- *Jointly fund rail infrastructure and bus acquisition programs with the states.*

Response

The Australian Government provides a range of targeted initiatives and incentives to support public infrastructure throughout Australia. Local governments may wish to use contributions from the untied funding provided under the Financial Assistance Grant program to commit to these priorities. Further, local councils can also consider grant funding opportunities from the Infrastructure and Regional Development portfolio.

Motion 145

Councils call on the Australian Government to increase the opportunities and levels of funding provided to local government for the delivery and management of transport infrastructure to local communities.

Response

In addition to existing infrastructure investment through the 10 year, \$100 billion infrastructure investment program, the 2020-21 Federal Budget measures includes direct support for local government. The 2020-21 Budget confirms the Australian Government's steadfast commitment to supporting and working with the local government sector, delivering a record investment in and via the sector.

Councils will receive a further \$1.24 billion in untied funding this year via the Financial Assistance Grant program, on top of the \$1.32 billion pre-payment paid in May 2020. This funding is untied in the hands of local governments, which means it could be allocated to council's local priorities.

The additional \$1 billion for the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Programme, on top of the \$500 million committed in May this year can be spent on locally determined priorities, which may, at the discretion of the individual council, be allocated to the maintenance of local infrastructure.

As part of the Local and State Government Road Safety Package, the Australian Government has committed an additional \$100 million per year to the Road to Recovery program from 2019-20, bringing the total commitment to the program from 2013-14 to 2023-24 to \$6.2 billion.

Motion 153

Councils call on the Australian Government to review the current responsibility for managing Australian national rail corridors including, but not limited to, undertaking a review of the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) Charter with a view to mitigate the risks to public safety (including fire and flood).

Response

The Australian Government is invested in ensuring effective management of the Australian system of rail corridors including ensuring safe operations and practices. The management of public safety, including risk of fire and flooding, in relation to the rail network is a whole-of-government responsibility. The Australian Government continually works with governments, rail track operators and other stakeholders to ensure legislation and operations support compliance with relevant safety standards.

The Government is committed to regular review and consideration of legislation and standards which support the safe operation of Australia's rail network. The Government will continue to work closely with stakeholders with a focus on public safety.



THE HON MICHAEL SUKKAR MP
Minister for Housing and Assistant Treasurer

Ref: MC20-020471

06 NOV 2020

Mayor David O'Loughlin
Australian Local Government Association
Australian Local Government Centre

alga@alga.asn.au

Dear Mayor O'Loughlin

Thank you for your correspondence of 21 August 2020 concerning housing, in particular the motions you have referred to me for consideration, covering the issues of homelessness, social housing and the National Rental Affordability Scheme.

The Australian Government remains committed to improving housing supply and affordability. We understand that if a family or an individual has a roof over their head, then all of life's other challenges become more manageable. Access to secure and affordable housing has significant economic and social benefits.

State and territory governments are primarily responsible for housing and homelessness. However, the Government provides substantial support to states and territories so they can fund important initiatives to improve housing outcomes. This includes around \$1.6 billion per year through the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA) to states and territories, which includes \$129 million in dedicated homelessness funding that must be matched by states and territories.

Under the NHHA, state and territory governments are responsible for determining priorities and the type and locations of services funded. State and territory governments also make decisions about social housing, including the building, location and all other tenancy matters.

The housing priority policy areas to be addressed under the NHHA include affordable housing, social housing, encouraging growth and supporting the viability of the community housing sector, tenancy reform, home ownership and planning and zoning reform initiatives.

Under the NHHA, states and territories are required to have a homelessness strategy that identifies reforms and initiatives that will contribute to a reduction in the incidence of homelessness, which includes: women and children affected by family and domestic violence, children and young people, Indigenous Australians, people experiencing repeat homelessness, people exiting institutions and care into homelessness, and older people.

The NHHA improves accountability as states and territories are required to have publicly available housing and homelessness strategies and contribute to improved data collection and reporting.

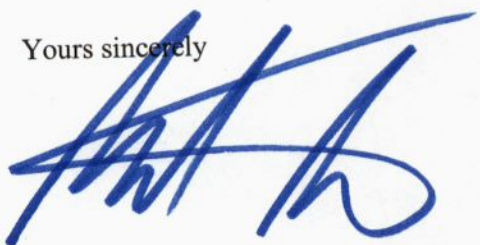
The Government also provides around \$5.5 billion per year in Government Rent Assistance to help eligible Australians pay their rent. Commonwealth Rent Assistance is a supplement payment for those Australians receiving income support payments.

The Government's establishment of the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation (NHFIC) in June 2018 is also helping to improve housing outcomes. NHFIC administers several programs, including: the Affordable Housing Bond Aggregator (AHBA), which provides cheaper, long-term finance for community housing providers; the \$1 billion National Housing Infrastructure Facility, which provides finance for critical infrastructure underpinning housing supply, particularly affordable housing; and the First Home Loan Deposit Scheme, which provides up to 20,000 guarantees in 2020-21 and 10,000 per financial year ongoing to allow eligible first home buyers to purchase a modest home sooner with a deposit of as little as 5 per cent. To date, NHFIC's AHBA has already increased the supply of social and affordable housing in Australia by supporting the delivery of more than 2,200 new and the refinancing of 6,300 existing social and affordable dwellings.

Finally, with regard to the motion to extend the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) – as you would be aware, NRAS was intended to provide incentives for 10 years. It will not be extended beyond this timeframe. Instead, and as outlined above, the Government is making significant investments alongside and through states to support housing and homelessness outcomes nationally.

I trust this information will be of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Michael Sukkar', with a stylized flourish at the end.

The Hon Michael Sukkar MP



Office of the Hon Paul Fletcher MP

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts
Federal Member for Bradfield

MC20-010349

Cr David O'Loughlin
Mayor for City of Prospect
President
Australian Local Government Association
8 Geils Court
Deakin ACT 2600

Dear Cr O'Loughlin

Thank you for your letter of 21 August 2020 to the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, concerning three local council motions that relate to matters relevant to the Minister's portfolio. The Minister has asked me to reply to you on his behalf and I am sorry it has taken so long to provide you with a response.

Responses to the three motions detailed in your letter are included below.

Motion 98

The Australian Government's policy is that all people in Australia should be able to access modern telecommunications services regardless of where they live or do business. Often, this means new telecommunications facilities need to be installed to provide those services.

Telecommunications carriers have certain specific powers under the *Telecommunications Act 1997* (the Act) to inspect, install and maintain facilities. The Act and the *Telecommunications Code of Practice 2018* (the Code) provide conditions related to the carrying out of an authorised installation or maintenance activity. For example, carriers are required to install low-impact facilities in a way that causes as little damage as practicable, and carriers must also restore land to a similar condition to how it was before the activity.

If a landowner is concerned that carriers are not meeting the conditions set out in the Act or Code, they can contact the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) to make a complaint on 1300 850 115 or by email to info@acma.gov.au.

If the Australian Local Government Association would like to meet with the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, or write further on telecommunications deployment policy issues, please contact Amy Crawford, Director Telecommunications Deployment Policy at amy.crawford@communications.gov.au or phone (02) 6171 1057.

A detailed explanation of the problems experienced by local governments regarding the costs arising from the installation and maintenance of services and utilities, including information or data, will help the Department to better understand the impact of the issue and to consider the need for any legislative change.

Motion 105

I acknowledge the concerns raised by the Australian Local Government Association about the impact of loot boxes in games and its interest in the Government taking steps to prevent harm to children and vulnerable people.

It is important that the content of computer games is classified appropriately. This helps Australians to make informed choices about what games they or their children watch and play. The National Classification Scheme requires that computer games are classified before they are sold or published in Australia. Computer games are classified by the Classification Board (the Board) or the International Age Rating Coalition (IARC) tool (for online and mobile games in participating storefronts including the Google Play, Microsoft and Nintendo stores). Content in computer games is classified according to standards in the National Classification Code and the Guidelines for the Classification of Computer Games (the Guidelines). Computer games are assigned a classification rating (e.g. G, PG) and include consumer advice. Consumer advice can relate to the six classifiable elements (themes, violence, sex, language, drug use and nudity) and can also include information about content in a game such as online interactivity and/or in-game purchases. More information can be found on the Australian classification website, www.classification.gov.au.

In December 2019, the Government appointed Neville Stevens AO as the independent expert to lead a review of Australian classification regulation. The review included consideration of the classification of games with loot boxes. Mr Stevens provided his report to the Government at the end of May 2020 and the Government is considering the report. Public submissions to the review can be viewed at www.communications.gov.au/have-your-say/review-australian-classification-regulation.

In relation to the concerns raised about the broadcast of gambling advertising on television and radio, the Government is aware of community concern about gambling advertising and is committed to reducing gambling-related harms for all Australians.

The Government also recognises the importance of gambling promotions being presented in a responsible manner. While providers of lawful services have a legitimate interest in advertising their services, the Government believes that such advertising must be subject to controls that appropriately reflect community standards. This principle is reflected in the regulatory safeguards that apply to the advertising of gambling services.

Most content broadcast in Australia is regulated by co-regulatory codes of practice developed by broadcasting industry sectors, in consultation with ACMA, in accordance with the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992*. This co-regulatory system recognises the importance of ensuring that television and radio content reflects community standards. Codes of practice are available on the ACMA's website at acma.gov.au/industry-codes-practice.

The *Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice* (the Commercial TV Code) applies to commercial free-to-air television broadcasters. The *Commercial Radio Code of Practice* (the Commercial Radio Code) applies to commercial radio broadcasters.

Relevantly, the Commercial TV Code prohibits gambling advertisements:

- during General (G), Preschool (P) or Children's (C) rated programs broadcast between:
 - 6.00 am and 8.30 am; and
 - 4.00 pm and 7.00 pm; and
- during any program that is broadcast between 5.00 am and 8.30 pm and which is principally directed at children.

These prohibitions do not apply during news, current affairs or sports programs broadcast during those time periods. They also do not apply to advertisements relating to such things as government sanctioned lotteries, keno or competitions, or, generally, to advertisements for entertainment or dining facilities where gambling may take place.

The Commercial TV Code and the Commercial Radio Code also include restrictions in relation to the showing of gambling promotions during live broadcasts of sporting events.

Broadcasting industry codes of practice are periodically reviewed. Interested parties may contact the relevant peak industry body to raise their concerns, and to enquire about how they can contribute to future review processes.

For commercial television broadcasters, Free TV Australia's contact details are:

Free TV Australia
First Floor
44 Avenue Road
MOSMAN NSW 2088
Web: www.freetv.com.au

For commercial radio broadcasters, Commercial Radio Australia's contact details are:

Commercial Radio Australia Ltd
Level 5
88 Foveaux Street
Surry Hills NSW 2010
Phone: (02) 9281 6577
Fax: (02) 9281 6599
Web: www.commercialradio.com.au

Motion 151

As indicated in the response to Motion 105, the Government also recognises the importance of gambling promotions being presented in a responsible manner. While providers of lawful services have a legitimate interest in advertising their services, the Government believes that such advertising must be subject to controls that appropriately reflect community standards. This principle is reflected in the regulatory safeguards that apply to the advertising of gambling services.

In 2018, further restrictions were applied to the showing of gambling promotions during live sporting events broadcast on commercial television, commercial radio, subscription television and the Special Broadcasting Service. More information about these restrictions is available on ACMA's website at acma.gov.au/gambling-ads-during-live-sports-broadcasts.

Additionally, in September 2018 new rules came into effect which restrict the showing of gambling promotions during online streams of live sporting events.

The *Broadcasting Services (Online Content Service Provider Rules) 2018* (Online Rules) contain gambling promotions restrictions that are, to the extent possible, similar to those which broadcasting industry codes impose on the broadcast of live sporting events.

More information about the Online Rules is available on ACMA's website at acma.gov.au/gambling-ads-during-sport-streamed-over-internet.

When considering appropriate policy settings, the Government engages regularly with individuals and organisations and has regard to prevailing community expectations.

Thank you for bringing the local council motions to the Minister's attention. I hope the information in this letter is of some help.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ryan Bloxsom', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ryan Bloxsom
Chief of Staff

12 / 11 / 2020



SENATOR THE HON RICHARD COLBECK

Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians

Minister for Youth and Sport

Ref No: MC20-034958

Mayor David O'Loughlin
President
Australian Local Government Association
8 Geils Court
DEAKIN ACT 2600

17 SEP 2020

Dear Mayor

Thank you for your correspondence of 21 August 2020 concerning motions put forward by the Australian Local Government Association that relate to my Sport and Aged Care portfolios.

The Australian Government continues to support encouraging more women and girls to participate in sport due to the strong mental and physical health benefits it provides. In the 2018–19 Budget, we announced a \$230 million package for sport participation and physical activity initiatives. This includes support for projects targeted at encouraging more women and girls to participate in sport and physical activity. Through the 2019–20 Budget, the Government is providing significant investments in women's sport across Australia. This includes \$150 million to support the development of female change room facilities at sporting grounds and for community swimming facilities across Australia.

The Women Leaders in Sport (WLIS) program is managed by Sport Australia in partnership with the Office for Women. Since 2002, WLIS has provided leadership development for over 24,000 women in sport through a series of programs – a year long targeted program for senior women leaders, individual and organisational development grants for leadership training and leadership workshops for individuals and organisations.

The Government's national sport plan – Sport 2030 notes there are opportunities to share facilities across community organisations and schools, in particular encouraging schools to ensure communities can access their facilities, where relevant and appropriate – essentially "Unlocking the School Gate".

The Government continues to focus on the unique challenges facing consumers and service providers in rural and remote Australia, as well as ensuring services are culturally appropriate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as aged care reform continues. The Government is providing unprecedented support through a range of programs and flexible care options including the Multi-Purpose Services and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Care Program.

The Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP has made a commitment to continuing to improve aged care for older Australians by announcing a Royal Commission in Aged Care Quality and Safety.

The Terms of Reference specifically covers how to deliver accessible affordable and high quality aged care services in regional, rural and remote locations.

Since 2016–17, the Government has invested in research to develop a new approach to funding residential aged care. The Australian National Aged Care Classification (AN-ACC), derived from the University of Wollongong's Resource Utilisation and Classification Study, is the proposed new funding model for residential aged care currently under consideration. The study found that the costs of providing residential care in rural and remote areas are considerably more than in other areas. As such, under the AN-ACC model these facilities would receive a greater fixed payment to account for these extra costs. The model is not prescriptive regarding specific care that needs to be provided to a resident to receive certain funding levels. This empowers health practitioners to use their clinical judgement, and take into account residents' preferences in developing care plans for residents. It also ensures facilities in rural and remote areas, with less access to allied health professionals, are able to access the same funding for high needs residents as their metropolitan counterparts.

A trial of the AN-ACC assessment framework started in November 2019, however was suspended in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The findings of the trial up to that point concluded that the model is fit for purpose, nationally scalable and able to be efficiently undertaken by an external assessment workforce. More information on residential aged care funding reform and the AN-ACC trial are available on the Department of Health's website at: www.health.gov.au.

Thank you for raising these matters.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. Colbeck', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Richard Colbeck

cc: The Hon Mark Coulton MP, Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications and Local Government

