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Budget Delivers for the Hunter Electorate

In May this year, Australians voted for Labor's plan for a better future and we delivered that plan in our first Budget.



We're helping Australians manage cost of living pressures and plan for the future.

Our \$7.5 billion, five-point cost of living package provides responsible and targeted relief to households without putting additional pressure on inflation through cheaper child care, expanding paid parental leave, cheaper medicines, more affordable housing and by getting wages moving again.

We will also boost productivity and grow the economy by delivering 480,000 fee-free TAFE places, providing 20,000 additional university places, driving investment in cleaner, cheaper energy, establishing the National Reconstruction Fund for a future made in Australia, delivering nation-building infrastructure projects, including in regional areas such as the Hunter and allowing older Australians to keep more of their pension when they work.

There are hard times ahead, and with a trillion dollars of debt that is getting more expensive to service, we have to make hard decisions to get the Budget back on track.

We have made \$28.5 billion in responsible Budget improvements and stopped the rorts and waste.

This is so that we can pay for what's important – the things Australians value most, such as \$6.1 billion more in hospitals, in Medicare, in extending COVID 19 support, and in expanding access to health care in the suburbs and regions of our country, including the roll-out of Urgent Care Clinics the Strengthening Medicare Fund to provide better access and care for patients.

We are also increasing the average care minutes per aged care resident and mandating that facilities have a registered nurse on site 24/7. As well as better care, residents can expect better food, which is fresh, healthy and safe. We have provided funds to end violence against women and children and have invested in practical measures to Close the Gap for First Nations people and communities, and to begin preparations for a referendum on a Voice to Parliament.

There is more to do, but our first 6 months in Government show we are delivering on what is important for the Hunter and we will continue to do that.

From Dan's Desk



Since the federal election a few short months ago, I have hit the ground running.

I do not, and will not, take your support for granted and will continue to be a strong voice for the Hunter electorate in Canberra.

I also want to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas.

Christmas brings out the best in our community for a number of reasons. It draws together family and friends in a festive atmosphere to enjoy each other's company and share a laugh and good times in person.

There will also be others who are working through this period to provide the important emergency and other services we need in our community and to those people a sincere thank you.

Christmas offers us the opportunity not only for celebration but also for reflecting on the past and looking ahead to the year to come.

On behalf of my family and my office, I wish you all a safe and Merry Christmas, and a bright and prosperous New Year, which I hope brings happiness and good health.

Dan

NBN Upgrades Improve Connectivity



I recently welcomed Michelle Rowland to the Hunter electorate to talk about improving internet connectivity.

Eligible residential homes and businesses in parts of the Hunter electorate can now place an order to upgrade their NBN connection to Fibre to the Premises (FTTP).

These upgrades will be available on demand where a customer in an eligible premise seeks a higher speed service through their Retail Service Provider.

This will allow residents and businesses to take advantage of the faster speeds which are increasingly important in a digital society and economy.

To further expand the benefits of fibre connections, the Australian Government has also committed to enabling an additional 1.5 million premises to transition from Fibre to the Node (FTTN) to Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) by 2025 – a significant proportion of which will be in regional areas.

Around 80 per cent of all regional and remote premises will have access to plans based on wholesale speeds of 100 Mbps or more by late 2025.

This is an opportunity for eligible local families and businesses to enjoy the benefits of a faster, more reliable fibre connection.

I would encourage the community to check the NBN website to see whether they are eligible for an upgrade by visiting www.nbn.com.au/fibreupgrade, and as always, if you have any issues with your connection or want further information, make sure you contact my office.



Making Child Care Cheaper

Anyone with children in early education and childcare knows how expensive it is, knows it's a massive disincentive to work more hours or more days. In fact, in the last 8 years, childcare costs have jumped by 41 percent.

A lot of Australians would want to do more paid work, but if they did, all of that pay would be gobbled up by the childcare bill. It means it's not worth it.

60 per cent of mothers of children under six who work, do part-time hours.

That's why the Albanese Labor Government is investing in Cheaper Child Care for the Hunter electorate.

Around 6,300 families in the Hunter electorate will benefit from this.

If we make child care cheaper it is good for children, good for parents and good for the economy. It is a massive productivity boost. It means a lot more highly skilled workers back in the workforce.

In fact, more than 1 million families will benefit from this plan. That means more parents can return to full time paid work sooner if they wish. There aren't many other things that'll get you a return on investment like that.

It's why we made cheaper child care a key part of our election campaign, and it's why we're delivering it now.

To attract and retain workers, we will also allow providers to discount child care fees for early childhood educators.

We know that with these changes, the demand for the early childhood education workforce will only grow. So we have included early childhood education under our fee free TAFE programs, as well as part of our commitment to 20,000 new university places.

We are planning for the new jobs of tomorrow and ensuring our children will have the educators they need.



Cyber Security – Stay Safe Online

We have recently seen a number of data breaches on companies such as Optus and Medibank. We have also seen a dramatic increase in the number of people falling victim to online scammers.

These data breaches have seen the personal identifiable information of millions of customers released online. This data included names, dates of birth, phone numbers, email addresses, residential addresses, driver's license, passport numbers and medical information.

The Government is taking these matters very seriously and recently Home Affairs Minister Clare O'Neil and Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus unveiled a new policing alliance to stop Australian companies and individuals from falling victim to cyber crime.

The new joint standing operation against cyber criminal syndicates is a partnership between the Australian Federal Police and the Australian Signals Directorate with around 100 officers working full time to prevent and halt hackers.

We have also introduced a bill to parliament to provide for tougher laws that will boost penalties for data breaches to at least \$50 million to provide and encourage companies to better protect their customers' data.

You should do everything you can to remain safe when online. Here are some simple steps to boost cyber security which include:

Update your device and turn on automatic updates to ensure you always have the most up-to-date security protection.

- Turn on multi-factor identification to increase the security of your accounts and make it harder for criminals to gain initial access to your device.
- Turn on automatic backups to copy and store critical information.
- Implement access controls to limit user access to only what is needed on devices.
- Turn on ransomware protection measures

1
Watch out for dodgy emails and texts
Watch out for suspicious messages and activity on your devices. Don't click on links if you're unsure.

2
Use a passphrase
Update your passwords to unique passphrases. A passphrase is a string of words, longer than a password - easy to remember and difficult to crack.

3
Turn on multi-factor authentication
It's one of the most effective ways to protect yourself against unauthorised access to your information.

For more info, go to the Australian Cyber Security Centre
www.cyber.gov.au

- Prepare a Cyber Emergency Checklist to reduce stress and recovery time.
- Stay up to date on cyber security threats and trends with ACSC Alert Service.
- Visit www.cyber.gov.au for more information.

Feel free to contact my office at any time if you have any questions.

First Seniors Forum A Huge Success

I recently held my first Seniors Forum for the Hunter electorate.

More than 200 people attended and enjoyed a wide range of information from several guest speakers.

We had guest speakers from Services Australia, a crime prevention officer from NSW Police, the Hunter Community Legal Centre and Lake Macquarie City Council. There were also information packs and resources available on a range of topics.

My Seniors Forums are free and aim to educate locals on a range of services available to seniors in our local community.

I will be holding more of these Seniors Forums right across the Hunter electorate in the New Year so look out for your invitation.



Delivering for the Hunter

The recent Federal Budget delivered more than \$400 million worth of projects to the Hunter electorate.

The Federal Budget also brought about enormous spending to regional Australia, with investment in roads, skills, cheaper childcare, affordable housing, and providing a huge boost to aged care, the NDIS, childcare and services.

This was a responsible Budget that delivers targeted cost-of-living relief, invests in the Hunters future, and delivers on our election commitments.

I was elected to be a strong voice for the Hunter and the Government has certainly heard me. This Budget delivers on all our election commitments right across the Hunter electorate.

Urgent Need for Urgent Care

I am proud to have one of the 50 Medicare Urgent Care Centres being built in the Hunter electorate. This is something that people have long asked for.

The Urgent Care Clinic will make it easier for locals to get high quality care for urgent, but non-life threatening health issues.

These new Urgent Care Clinics will be open extended business hours, seven days a week to provide the care you and your family need, with no out of pocket costs to patients.

This new clinic will take pressure off of our local emergency department, leaving overworked doctors and nurses available to attend to more serious and life-threatening cases.

The clinic will be established as part of an existing GP clinic or community health centre in the Hunter electorate and is expected to be operational from 2023-24.

We have also reinstated funding for the GP Access After Hours Clinic at Toronto Polyclinic. This funding will mean patients are able to access face to face and telehealth primary care services outside business hours. These services will be bulk billed and delivered by GPs and Registered Nurses.

All of this means residents in Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, Morisset, Cooranbong, Toronto, and right across the Hunter electorate, will have access to quality care and will mean a reduction in Hospital waiting times.



More Uni & TAFE Placements

9 out of 10 jobs in the future will require tertiary qualifications and that is why we are funding more Uni and TAFE Places.

To help combat skills shortages in professions such as teaching, nursing and engineering, an additional 967 additional places at the University of Newcastle along with 180,000 fee-free TAFE and vocational placements are available as part of the National Skills Agreement.

More Affordable Housing

We will build more affordable and social housing to help with the current crisis.

Too many people are struggling to find safe and affordable housing. The Government will deliver 40,000 new social and affordable homes across Australia. These are just the first steps to increase our housing supply.



Delivering for the Hunter

Paid Parental Leave

The Government has delivered the biggest boost to Paid Parental Leave since it was created by the former Labor Government in 2011.

We have expanded Paid Parental Leave to 26 weeks. A full six months.

By 2026, every family with a new baby will be able to access a total of 6 months paid leave, shared between the two parents. And single parents will be able to access all 26 weeks.

It's a modern policy, for modern families.



Delivering Major Road Upgrades

The Muswellbrook Bypass is the big-ticket item in the Budget, with \$268 million allocated to the project.

Lake Macquarie Council will receive \$56 million for Mandalong Road upgrades.

Both of these projects will unlock investment in the local area and help reduce major congestion.

The Singleton Bypass remains fully funded and work will commence in 2023.

Delivering Improved Regional Facilities

For too long, parts of the Hunter electorate were underfunded. This Budget has delivered major investment in facilities right across the electorate.

Muswellbrook Council have received funding for the Muswellbrook Town Centre Project, funding for the upgrade of the grandstand and facilities at Muswellbrook Olympic Park and funding for the Muswellbrook Preschool Playgroup to purchase equipment, toys and resources for a toy library.

Singleton Council will receive funding for the Alroy Oval Precinct upgrade, which will include three full sized football pitches with a warm up area, a multi-use futsal/ basketball/ netball court, upgraded amenities building and car park, new playground, shelters and footpaths. They also received funding for the Singleton Rugby Club amenities fit out and women's change rooms.

Lake Macquarie Council received funding to upgrade and repair Mums Cottage at Holmesville. The Cottage is in dire need of new piers, painting and waterproofing. They also received funding for the Edgeworth Eagles fencing and lighting.

Cessnock Council received funding for the Cessnock Regional Skate Park, and for the BMX Facility upgrade at Carmichael Park. Over a quarter of the population in the Cessnock LGA are within the 5-24 years age bracket and this project will be innovative, accessible and expressive for our youth and give young talent better opportunities for development. They also received funding for the Baddeley Park lighting upgrade.



Delivering For The Environment

Ensuring our beautiful Lake remains pristine and accessible to everyone was key in our Budget.

We have delivered Lake Macquarie Council \$10 million for a dredge to help keep the Channel open and accessible to all boats, which will see a major economic boost to the Western parts of Lake Macquarie that have suffered due to the lack of a permanent dredging solution.

We have also delivered funding for Urban River projects between Dora Creek and Cockle Creek.

It's great to have a Government that delivers on its promises and delivers for the regions. This is a great start for the Hunter electorate, and I will continue to fight for our fair share.

Local Sporting Champions

I recently held a presentation for the recipients of the 2022 Local Sporting Champion Grants program.

The Local Sporting Champions program provides financial assistance to young people aged between 12 and 18 years to compete, coach or umpire in their chosen sport.

The Hunter has produced some outstanding sportspeople in the past, and it is important that we support the next crop of our local sporting talent. Unfortunately succeeding in sport doesn't just take talent and determination – parents also often have to put their hands in their pockets to get their children to competitions. I'm very pleased to be able to help these families with financial support through these grants.

Sport is important in the development of young people: it teaches them life-long skills like teamwork, keeps them fit and healthy, and allows them to excel in something they love and enjoy.

I encourage any budding champions out there who have the opportunity of competing at a state, national or international event to apply for a grant by contacting my office or checking out the website ausport.gov.au.

Congratulations to:

Aaliyah Kilroy – who competed at the National Youth Football Championships

Cameron Gawn - who competed at the School Sport Australia Swimming Championships

Eddie Westfall - who competed at the NSW Combined High Schools Sports Association Secondary Boys' Tennis Championship

Ella Fairhall - who competed at the Auscycling National Championships

Ethan Williams - who competed at the Australian All Schools Track and Field Championships

Harrison Preece - who competed at the School Sport Australia 12 & under National Golf Championships

Isaac Elson - who competed at the NSW Combined High Schools Sports Association Secondary Boys' Tennis Championship



Koby Kattau - who competed at the Australian School Sports Championships in Lawn Bowls

Jakob Thompson - (*pictured above*) who competed at the Virtus Oceania Asia Games in swimming.

Liam Mackenzie-Smith - who competed at the Australian Interschool Equestrian Championships

Makaylah Grace Fenwick - who competed at the Australian Interschool Equestrian Championships

Nate Ebbeck - who competed at the Australian Junior Motocross Championships

Riley Burgess - who competed at the Australian Junior Motocross Championships

Sophie Fairhall - who competed at the Auscycling National Championships

Tom Brum - who competed at the National Ice Hockey Championships

Zac Nichols - who competed at the NSW Combined High Schools Sports Association Secondary Boys' Tennis Championship

Zane Bourke - who competed at the Auscycling National Championships

Grants and Assistance

A number of Federal Government grant programs have opened for schools and organisations across the Hunter electorate.

Full information about these grants and how to apply is on my website at www.DanRepacholiMP.com or you can call my office for more information on 02 4991 1022.

I also publish a monthly Grants Newsletter that has the details for a large number of grants that could be of benefit to both individuals, community organisations and schools across the Hunter electorate.

I would encourage you to visit my website and sign up to be on the list.



Mobile Offices

The Hunter electorate covers more than 10,000 square kilometres and spans from Wyee in the south to Sandy Hollow in the west.

As many people cannot attend my office due to the distance required to travel, I hold regular mobile offices and street stalls right across the Hunter electorate.

I advertise my upcoming mobile offices and street stalls in my weekly e-newsletter and on my website at www.DanRepacholiMP.com

You can always call my office on **02 4991 1022** to see when I will next be in your area. If your matter is urgent, you can always speak with my staff or I can arrange a chat over the phone as time permits.



Flag Requests

One great part of my job is getting to visit local schools, not-for-profit organisations, Australian exchange students, serving defence personnel, and families of war veterans and present them with flags for presentations or display.

My office can provide the National Flag, the Aboriginal Flag and the Torres Strait Islander Flag to your group.

All you need to do is drop me a short letter or jump onto my website, [www.](http://www.DanRepacholiMP.com)

[DanRepacholiMP.com/community-hub/flag-requests](http://www.DanRepacholiMP.com/community-hub/flag-requests) and fill in the form.

Flags can be collected from my office, or I can arrange a visit to present them formally.



Stay Up To Date

Every week, I publish a short e-newsletter about the issues of the week and my travels around the electorate. You can sign up via my website, www.DanRepacholiMP.com/contact/e-news-sign-up or by sending me an email.

During my campaign, I used social media to connect and engage with our local community. I'd like to extend that level of service to my new role as your Federal MP.

Please follow me online, and in particular, engage with comments.

See you online!



Congratulatory Messages

Did you know that Australians who are celebrating certain milestone birthdays or wedding anniversaries can request a congratulatory message from the Prime Minister, Governor-General or the King?

My Electorate Office can organise congratulatory messages for 50th, 60th, 65th and 70th Wedding Anniversaries and for 90th & 100th Birthdays from the Governor-General, Prime Minister, Premier and Federal, State and Local MPs.

The King and Governor-General will also send special messages for 60th Wedding Anniversaries and 100th Birthdays.

You can request a congratulatory message through my electorate office. To request a message, you can call the office on 02 4991 1022, contact me via my website, www.DanRepacholiMP.com or visit the office at 3 Edward Street, Cessnock. Please note that you must provide evidence (eg. birth certificate, marriage certificate, statutory declaration).

The message will be posted directly to the nominee. For surprise messages, an alternate postal address (to a relative or care-giver for example) can be given for the message.

A congratulatory message can be requested up to two months prior to the event. A belated message request can be requested up to one month after the event.

Bruce Turns 100

Bruce Read was born in 1922 at Ginna Gulla Station, a vast property just outside Gunnedah. He was a sports fanatic and a fast runner who played cricket and rugby. He has a passion for sport that carried through his whole life adding ice skating, skiing, and squash before finally retiring from golf at around age 92.

Bruce served during the war as an armourer. Following the war, he started a successful business and was raising his two sons as a single parent when he met Lois. A 44 year marriage followed which gave Bruce a new life.

Summer holidays in the family Kombi, beach life was always front and centre. Property. Success. Friendships. Travel.

A successful business...a true-to-life renaissance.

Their dinner parties were famous, and Christmas was an open door no matter where it was celebrated.

After travelling and living from Balmain to Pearl Beach, Drummoyne to Burleigh it was then finally back to Singleton where his family had settled.

Bruce eventually put pen to paper and wrote his memoirs - *Getting on with it*. Hats off Bruce, this is exactly what you did!

Well done on reaching 100.



JP Services Available

If you need any documents signed or certified, there are JPs in my office every day during business hours. Drop in if you need the service.



WANT TO BECOME A JUSTICE OF THE PEACE?

By volunteering to become a JP, you will provide services to your community or place of employment.

To become a JP you will need to:

Step 1: Confirm your eligibility and register for JP Online.

Step 2: Complete the JP Knowledge Test on JP Online.

Step 3: Complete the JP appointment application on JP Online. This includes requesting a NSW Member of Parliament (MP) to consider nominating you.

Step 4: Take the Oaths of Office.

Visit the JP website: www.jp.nsw.gov.au for more information.

Dan Repacholi MP, Your Federal Member for Hunter

ALWAYS AVAILABLE TO HELP If I can help with any Federal Government matters please call my office on **02 4991 1022** or send an email to **Dan.Repacholi.MP@aph.gov.au**

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