

JEFF'S NEWSLETTER 2011- Edition 10

Included in this edition is information about the following; LNP to double Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme, LNP school reforms, more red tape for businesses and Bills before the Parliament.

Further details of all my media releases, speeches and previous newsletters can be found on www.jeffseeney.com.au. I always welcome your feedback.

Topics in this issue :

1. My schedule & general information
2. LNP to double Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme
3. LNP school reforms benefit schools and students
4. Queensland's 400,000 businesses face New Year red tape nightmare
5. Bills currently before the Parliament

1. My schedule & general information

The Parliament has now risen for the summer break and will re-commence on the 14th February 2012. This of course would change if the Premier calls an election before then. The Qld State Election is due in March next year. However this will coincide with local government elections which are to be held on 31 March 2012. It is impossible to guess when the Premier will call an election. It could be as early as January or as late as June.

Notwithstanding when the state election may occur the LNP will continue to formulate policies that will bring back accountability, return services, cut waste and ensure strong economic growth. To date the LNP has announced over 40 policies that will be implemented should we win government. Many more will be released over the coming weeks. Details of these policies and further information about the LNP can be found on the LNP and Opposition websites. I would encourage you to visit these sites and provide feedback to me. <http://www.qldopposition.com.au/policies/> or <http://www.lnp.org.au/policies>

In conclusion I would like to wish you and your family happy tidings for the festive season and the very best for 2012.

2. LNP to double Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme

People living in rural communities will get more affordable access to health services with an LNP pledge to double the current patient travel and accommodation subsidy.

I have lobbied for an increase in the PTSS for many years and am very pleased with the commitment given by the LNP. The commitment by LNP Leader Campbell Newman will mean an extra \$100 million over four years to assist country people manage the financial burden and stress of travelling to access specialist health care.

The LNP will **double** the travel subsidy from 15 cents per km to 30 cents per km, and **double** the accommodation subsidy from \$30 to \$60 per person for patients forced to travel for treatment and medical care.

Many people living in country towns have told me the current Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme is inadequate. Some patients are even deferring treatment because of the costs associated with travelling to metropolitan centres to get access to health services.

Campbell Newman's commitment to better care and support offers a helping hand for the people of regional Queensland.

Due to the Bligh Government's mismanagement and chronic waste, the subsidy hasn't changed for more than a decade – despite rising charges and cost of living increases. The accommodation allowance has been fixed at \$30 per person per night for well over a decade resulting in an almost 50 per cent real cut in accommodation assistance. Patients who travel by car receive a paltry subsidy of just 15 cents per kilometre.

This current tired, 20-year Labor Government has repeatedly ignored the cries of help from regional Queenslanders by refusing to increase the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme despite the spiralling costs.

When you waste money like Labor does, important help like this much needed assistance to regional Queenslanders suffers.

After a decade of Bligh Government inaction, the LNP reform to double the travel subsidy will provide peace of mind for people and families who are struggling with health issues like cancer.

The LNP CanDo team will grow a four pillar economy and cut waste to revitalise frontline health services.

The LNP will address the needs of country towns and country people.

3. *LNP school reforms benefit schools and students*

LNP Leader Campbell Newman has unveiled a plan to give a number of Queensland schools greater autonomy so they can deliver high quality education outcomes for their students with less bureaucracy.

“A CanDo LNP Government will introduce an *Independent Public Schools* concept – which means state schools can have more control over their own decisions.

“ This means independence for principals who can demand higher behavioural standards from students, and have the authority to enforce these expectations.

“ It means independence for schools to spend their budgets in a way that will bring the most benefit to the school and their community.

“It means the independence to hire staff to fill identified needs, and fit the school environment,” Mr Newman said.

“This tired, 20-year-old Labor Government has failed Queensland students on the basics. Education standards have collapsed in Queensland, leaving us lagging behind other Australian states.

“Our children are not getting the good solid foundation they deserve because many of them are missing out on essential educational building blocks such as literacy and numeracy.”

Mr Newman said the record number of students moving from the public school system to the private school system showed the current Labor model wasn't working.

Under this CanDo LNP policy, around 120 Queensland State schools will be given the opportunity to volunteer to transition to *Independent Public Schools* over the next four years, with 30 State schools transitioning each year.

“This LNP education initiative is modelled on the outstanding success of similar programs operating in Western Australian and overseas, and will attract recently announced Federal Government educational support,” Mr Newman said.

“These schools, principals and their local communities will have greater control and ownership of their school as well as greater input into decisions that affect them.

Schools which participate will receive up to \$50,000 to cover any charges associated with transitioning to these innovative reforms. In addition, *Independent Public Schools* will be eligible to receive up to a further \$50,000 in funding each year for administrative purposes.

Shadow Education Minister Bruce Flegg said the LNP was committed to revitalising Queensland's front line services and getting the basics right, and this policy would address important education needs now.

“Queensland students' literacy and numeracy results were ranked last or nearly last of all states across all year levels. But all Labor can do after 20 odd years in government is to issue a discussion paper promising funds we haven't received for children who aren't even born yet,” Mr Flegg said.

Mr Newman said only a CanDo LNP Government will grow the economy so we can afford to give all our children the benefit of accessing and enjoying a good education.

“The Cando LNP also recently released its plan to provide tablet technology like iPads for special needs students.”

“We'll get Queensland back on track through practical, workable, commonsense plans to revitalise frontline services like education,” he said.

4. Queensland's 400,000 businesses face New Year red tape nightmare

The Bligh Labor government is set to tie Queensland's 400,000 businesses a more costly and confusing red tape in the form of onerous new Workplace, Health & Safety regulations from January 1.

This tired, 20-year Labor government has rushed to sign-up for the new regulations - covering no less than 400 pages - with little or no consultation with business.

In less than four weeks and with Christmas-New Year to boot, Queensland's 400,000 businesses will be forced to comply with more red tape, more paperwork and a whole raft of new regulations that few have heard of and fewer understand.

The LNP has called on the Bligh government and the Minister responsible, Cameron Dick, to delay the introduction beyond January 1, to allow for full and proper consultation and more importantly, education.

LNP Shadow Minister for Industrial Relations & Employment Skills, Mr Ted Malone, Mr Malone says his office has been inundated by concerned small business owners and managers who said there'd been little consultation and that page after page of the new regulations were totally confusing.

"The government claims to have held a few meetings and printed 1,000 (one thousand) brochures, but that's hardly going to help tens of thousands of smaller and family-run businesses that will be held responsible even though the government says they'll be lenient during a transition period - whatever that means.

"There's no clarity, no understanding from this long-term Labor government.

"Who in Labor's ranks has run a small business or had to comply with any of the government's crazy level of red tape. Who in Labor's ranks has employed staff, paid wages and filled out monthly BAS returns?"

The Bligh Labor government has rushed ahead and signed-up for new national laws for the incentive payments from Canberra, without bothering to check with Queensland businesses on the overlap of codes and regulations.

It's a nightmare for our already struggling business sector, but no one in Labor's ranks understands or cares.

The LNP CanDo team will cut waste to support our business sector.

5. Bills currently before the Parliament

1. STRATEGIC CROPPING LAND BILL

2. POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

3. DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PROTECTION BILL
4. RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AND ROOMING ACCOMMODATION AMENDMENT BILL
5. MT GRAVATT SHOWGROUNDS AMENDMENT BILL
6. PROPERTY AGENTS BILL
7. MOTOR DEALERS AND CHATTEL AUCTIONEERS BILL
8. COMMERCIAL AGENTS BILL
9. AGENTS FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION BILL
10. CHARTER OF BUDGET HONESTY BILL
11. FAIR TRADING INSPECTORS BILL