



Claire, Senator Jan McLucas, and Bill Gissane, the ALP candidate for the Federal seat of Fairfax at the Maleny Community Centre Opening on 22 March.



## Senator Claire Moore Weekly Update *28 Mar 2013*

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*This week has seen five NDIS forums in Mt Gravatt, Beenleigh and Strathpine. All the forums were well attended and especially at Mt Gravatt forums where there were over 200 people across two forums. The level of interest was high and many people attended simply because they wanted to know more about the Federal Government's NDIS.*

*I am always in awe of the strength and courage shown by those with disabilities and impressed by the support and nurturing they receive from families and friends. This is a very important issue and the introduction of an NDIS will improve the lives of many people and the sooner we are able to provide the range of services that will be available under the NDIS the better.*

*I would like to wish everyone a happy Easter – enjoy the time with family and friends and keep yourself safe over the long weekend.*

*Senator Claire Moore, Labor Senator for Queensland*

**Plan your journey and arrive safely this Easter** -Australians driving on the roads during this Easter break are urged to think ahead and plan their journey. Each year during the Easter break there are a dozen or more road deaths and for every fatality around 20 more people are seriously injured.

We want everyone to arrive safely so, whether you are planning a longer trip or just driving around town, keep in mind the basics of road safety for you and your passengers: make sure everyone wears their seatbelts, don't drive after drinking, keep to the speed limits and leave plenty of time for rest breaks."

The Government is committed to reducing the number of deaths and injuries from road crashes. Through the **National Road Safety Strategy 2011–2020** the Government is working with state, territory and local governments to move towards a road transport system that is inherently safe, built around four fundamentals—**Safe Roads; Safe Speeds; Safe Vehicles; and Safe People**.

Through the Strategy, the target is to reduce the annual numbers of deaths and serious injuries on our roads by at least 30 per cent by 2020. In many parts of the country, double demerit points will apply over the Easter break.

**Melanoma Awareness Day March** - The Melanoma Awareness Foundation was proud to host the 5th Annual Melanoma Awareness Day March in Brisbane, supported this year by MPA (Melanoma Patients Australia), the 4km walk lifted spirits in highlighting awareness and education of melanoma skin cancer and remembering loved ones affected by this insidious disease.



The Melanoma Awareness Foundation [MAF] is a Health Promotion Charity registered with the ATO and has DGR (deductible gift recipient) status. MAF was founded in February 2008 in loving memory of Amanda Carter who tragically lost her life to Melanoma at the tender age of 25 [[more info here](#)].

MAF has been set up to promote and improve Awareness, Prevention and Education of Melanoma and Skin Cancer. Currently there are approximately 1700 deaths from Melanoma in Australia and is third in Cancer Causing Deaths. Queensland has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world, which is not a statistic we should be proud of. Current education information is in great need of being updated, specific and appropriate.

**It's the Economy, stupid!** - Joe Hockey, the Opposition's Shadow Treasurer, was in Brisbane on Thu 28 Mar, appearing on various Radio shows talking about the apparent 'dire' state of the Australian economy.

This sparked a reaction from an economist of more than 25 years experience, including almost 13 years with global banks, who is sick of the misinformation campaign being run by the Opposition and sections of the media about our economy. This person welcomes a debate on the economy, but wants to make sure we stick to the facts.

This morning it continued with a beat up in the press misrepresenting Australia's modest debt.

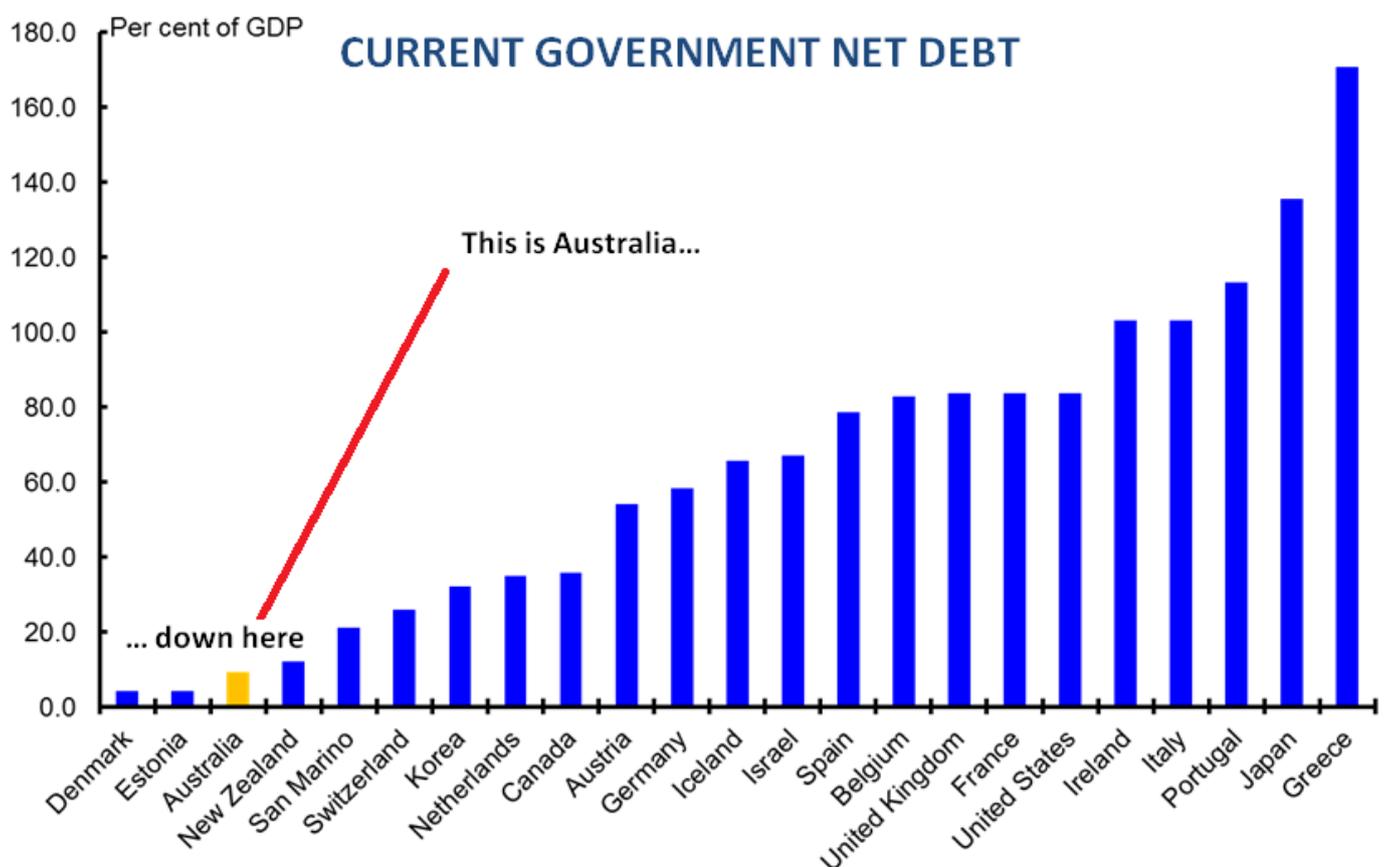
**The fact is Australia's net debt is dramatically lower than the net debt levels for every single major advanced economy.**

Our current net debt is 10% of GDP, compared to about 80% for the USA and the UK, and around 35% for Canada.

Our Government made a choice to support local jobs during the GFC, a choice many countries around the world could not or did not make. The graph shows that they will be paying a very high price for many years.

Australia's debt is so low, **it has the rolled gold triple-A rating.** Interest rates are low and our economy is the envy of the industrialised world.

Join people taking a stand against misinformation. [Just click here](#) or on the graph below. **Basic indisputable facts.**



**Gillard Government releases new incentives to build affordable rental homes** - The Gillard Labor Government today reaffirmed its commitment to affordable rental housing with a new dedicated round of funding to support 'shovel ready' projects under the **National Rental Affordability Scheme [NRAS]**.

This new round will open **on 18 April** for up to 1000 shovel-ready homes to be substantially completed by June 2014 and available for rent by end December 2014, from withdrawn or surrendered incentives that can be reallocated. **The new NRAS round will close on 22 May 2013.**

It was also announced that the fifth round of incentives to build about 10,000 new affordable rental homes under the NRAS would **open on 7 May and close on 6 August 2013.**

The much anticipated fifth round is worth about \$1 billion over 10 years, staggered to provide organisations adequate time to apply, and ensure the pace of delivery of NRAS homes does not slow down.

Housing affordability is a concern for many families right across Australia and the government is investing heavily to address that concern. This Government has responded with **more than \$20 billion** worth of measures to help people with home ownership and more affordable rental housing.

Under the NRAS, the business and community sectors receive financial incentives to build new homes and rent them to low and middle income households at a rate that is at least 20 per cent below the market rate.

More than 12,000 homes have been built under the National Rental Affordability Scheme, with close to 28,000 under way. This latest round of incentive allocations will aim to deliver the last 10,000 homes, to reach our goal of 50,000 new more affordable rental homes by 30 June 2016.

More information on Round 5 of the National Rental Affordability Scheme, go to [www.fahcsia.gov.au/nras](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/nras)

**Brisbane Small Business will be hit by Abbott's Savage Cuts** - Tony Abbott needs to front up to Brisbane small businesses about his plans to rip away important tax concessions. The Leader of the Opposition visited a small business in Brisbane today but what he won't tell the 560,000 small businesses of Queensland is that he has a plan to take away the \$6,500 instant asset tax write-off.

This tax break means that small businesses can invest in the equipment they need to grow their business. Small businesses can claim an immediate deduction for each new asset costing less than \$6,500, for as many assets as they purchase.

Mr Abbott cannot pretend to be the friend of small business but at the same time promise to rip away this important tax break. Mr Abbott should stop pretending and come clean with small businesses about his plans to cut support for the sector.

**\$320 million deal for Homelessness** - The Australian Government today announced a \$320 million agreement with the states and territories which ensures the continued provision of vital homelessness services. The Federal Government made \$159 million available in early March, conditional on the states and territories agreeing to match the Commonwealth's contribution.

Federal Minister for Housing and Homelessness Mark Butler said the agreement ensures that services currently provided under the current National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness continue.

"Service providers now have the certainty they need about next year's funding enabling them to continue providing critical support to some of the most vulnerable Australians," Mr Butler said.

The Commonwealth has also committed additional support for capital projects that help people move out of homelessness into safe and sustainable housing.

"A \$76 million development fund will now be available to provide new accommodation arrangements and states and territories will now be invited to bid for a portion of the fund as part of a competitive process."

"We remain committed to halving the rate of homelessness by 2020 because every Australian deserves a safe and secure home."

"We've invested an unprecedented \$20 billion in housing and homelessness services since coming to Government and we remain committed to halving the rate of homelessness by 2020 because every Australian deserves a safe and secure home."

**Newman government refuses to accept more money for Homelessness** - As if it wasn't enough that the Newman Government has slashed funding to services that support people with disability, older Australians and the mentally ill, they've now set their sights on the homeless.

The Gillard Labor Government is offering to increase the level of funding to the Queensland Government for homelessness services under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, but instead of accepting that new funding – and matching it – they've chosen to use homeless Australians as a political football.

"We've put an offer on the table and other states have engaged constructively in negotiating the agreement, but the Newman Government has again demonstrated its intent to put political fights ahead of the best interests of Queenslanders," Mr Butler said.

“We all know what the Newman Government has done to social services since coming to power - they've slashed funding to NGOs and then gagged those same NGOs from speaking out against their crippling cuts.”

Since November 2012, the Newman Government has refused to provide detailed information to determine the level of homelessness services funded under this National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness. Mr Butler said without this information there is no way of knowing where the services are located, let alone how much funding each service receives or how much funding the Commonwealth should provide.

“Queensland is the only state that has refused to supply this information – it’s a real shame for people in Queensland who stand to lose from the Newman Government’s careless approach.”

“This is not the way to try and secure essential services for Queensland’s most vulnerable people.”

## WHAT’S ON UPCOMING EVENTS AND FUNDRAISERS

**SOCIAL POLICY FORUM WITH MARK BUTLER, MP** - Claire invites you to join her at a social policy forum with Mark Butler MP, Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, Housing and Homelessness and Social Inclusion. Social policy primarily refers to how we develop and put in place the guidelines, principles, legislation and activities which will affect the living conditions of an individual, a family or a community. This will be a great opportunity for you to take part in a discussion about the issues that are important to you, your family and your community.

**DATE: Thursday 4th April 2013**

**TIME: 3.30pm to 5.30pm**

**VENUE: Wynnum Workers Club, Bognor Road, Tingalpa**

**Please RSVP to 07 3252 7101 by 12 noon on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> of April.**

**LABOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION NETWORK FORUM ON ELECTRICITY PRICING** - There is a forum on Electricity Pricing being held on Tuesday April 16th on the 2nd floor of the TLC Building, 16 Peel St, South Brisbane, by Labor Environmental Action Network (LEAN), one of the fringe groups of the party that focuses on environmental policy. The forum will look at:

- Why are electricity prices increasing?
- How Labor's policies can:

- a) Encourage energy conservation and transition to renewables
- b) Protect vulnerable consumers from unaffordable price rises
- c) Protect public sector jobs in the energy industry

The Speakers will include Peter Simpson (Secretary of the Electrical Trades Union), Peter Casey (former sustainability manager at Energex), Rob Farrago (co-founder of Local Power) and Ngaire McGaw (ex-convenor of LEAN QLD and Sustainable Jamboree) and Curtis Pitt MP (Shadow Minister for Energy).

RSVPs are not necessary. If you have any enquiries you can contact Dick Copeman on 0439 728 992.

### APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN FOR NATIVE TITLE ANTHROPOLOGIST GRANTS PROGRAM

Applications are now open for funding to support anthropologists interested in native title work. Anthropologists play an integral part of the native title claims system and a shortage of anthropologists leads to a delay in the resolution of claims. All eligible applicants are encouraged to apply for the grants program in order to promote the professional development of anthropologists working in the native title system.

The closing date for applications is 19 Apr 2013 at 5:00pm. Information on the grants at [www.ag.gov.au](http://www.ag.gov.au)

**2013 CARER-FRIENDLY BUSINESS AWARDS** — Nominations for the 2013 Carer-Friendly Business Awards are now open. These awards recognise businesses and individuals who have gone the extra mile for carers. To nominate for the awards visit <http://www.carerqld.asn.au>

**SEQ BUS NETWORK REVIEW REJECTED BY CITY COUNCIL** - After a wide-spread community campaign the sweeping changes recommended for Brisbane's bus network have been thrown out by the Brisbane City Council after the State announced any changes would be made by the city council, which had objected to the recommendations.

The state government's Transport Minister Scott Emerson, initiated the review in July 2012. The results, released at the beginning of March this year, recommended that southeast Queensland's 456 bus routes be cut to 345, and that there would be substantial changes & alterations to many other routes.

The proposals sparked protests by commuters, unions and the LNP-led BCC, which last week passed a motion opposing some of the changes. A list of the proposed affected routes is [here](#).

#### Claire's current committee work:

- **Aged Care (Living Longer Living Better) Bill 2013; Australian Aged Care Quality Agency Bill 2013; Australian Aged Care Quality Agency (Transitional Provisions) Bill 2013; Aged Care (Bond Security) Amendment Bill 2013; Aged Care (Bond Security) Levy Amendment Bill 2013**
- **Aboriginal Land Rights and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013**
- **Therapeutic Goods Amendment (2013 Measures No. 1) Bill 2013**
- **The involuntary or coerced sterilisation of people with disabilities in Australia**
- **Impacts on health of air quality in Australia**
- **Supply of chemotherapy drugs such as Docetaxel**
- **Care and management of younger and older Australians living with dementia and behavioural and psychiatric symptoms of dementia (BPSD)**

You can be involved in the work of a committee by lodging a submission to current inquiries. Claire has been involved in many Senate committees, and encourages everyone to [find out more info](#) on the role of committees, and to have a look at the [list of current committee inquiries](#).

***Want to know how to get the Federal Government to consider your petition? Find out about petitioning the Senate [here](#), or petitioning the House of Representatives, [here](#).***