

Gaelle's Gazette

Nationals Member for Northern Victoria

Winter 2024



Big Ideas Forum - Future of AI in the Regions



Recently, I hosted a big ideas forum in Bendigo with my Nationals colleague Senator Bridget McKenzie about the effects of artificial intelligence and the potential for AI to benefit our regions. I would like to thank all those who attended and contributed to this important discussion, especially the members of the panel: Nathan Vincent, Technology Columnist for McPherson Media Group; Shainal Kavar, La Trobe University Chief Information Officer; Daswin De Silva, Professor of Analytics and AI at La Trobe University; Craig Hunter, Director at Clear Dynamics; Doug Amos, Sales Manager at Ag Leader; and Dr Umair Masood, a GP and founder of ConsultNote.ai. AI presents a new and exciting frontier, and it was great to hear the panel provide insights into this rapidly developing technology. The forum paid tribute to the life work of Bruce Nicholls, a Nationals member who was a former diplomat, businessman and author. Bruce was a big-picture person. He was passionate about public policy and promoted discussion on key issues. AI is rapidly changing. It presents risks as well as opportunities for our society. It is an important conversation and one that we need to have because it affects us all.

Budget goes from bad to worse

It was fantastic to have Brad Rowswell, Shadow Treasurer of Victoria in Bendigo following the state budget to chat about the affects that it will have on local communities.

After a decade of financial mismanagement under Labor, Victoria's net debt has risen from \$21.8 billion, to a projected \$187.8 billion by 2028. We are seeing the real impacts of this debt play out across our communities, resulting in underfunded and under-resourced education, police, CFA, health, housing and transport services.

Labor can't manage money, can't manage projects, and regional Victorians are continuing to pay the price.

A change of government is desperately needed to restore transparency and get our state back in the black, and back on track.





National Volunteers Week

Was great to kick off National Volunteers Week with a visit to Loddon Mallee Volunteer Hub! Volunteers are critical to helping events and organisations run effectively right across Northern Victoria.

According to Volunteering Australia, 32.1% of Victorian's volunteer in their communities, which is one of the highest rates in the country!



Save Public Access to our Parks

Recently I met with Jason from PMAV (Prospectors and Miners Association of Victoria) to hear about the threats to outdoor pursuits if the Labor Government established more National Parks in Victoria.

Sign the petition online:
www.parliament.vic.gov.au/get-involved/petitions/stop-the-creation-of-any-new-national-parks/



NTRO's Approach to Road Safety

Recently I visited the National Transport Research Organisation (NTRO) in Port Melbourne with the Nationals Team. NTRO take an innovative approach to road maintenance and road safety, with the ability to provide insights into the technological advancements and environmental initiatives driving road standards. While the Allan Labor Government keeps ignoring the problem, we need to rethink how we tackle road safety issues and the NTRO can certainly help in this area.



Pharmacy Visit

I was pleased to catch up with Andrew and Kin recently to hear about the work local pharmacies are doing.

For many rural communities they are a local health hub where people can get information and advice about their health.

I thank them for providing insight into a very rapidly changing profession!



Victory Christian College Visit

Was fantastic to visit Victory Christian College to chat to the year 12 Outdoor and Environment Studies class! We had a very in depth discussion about how policy can affect the environment and some of the effects of ending the native timber industry.

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