



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Coalition Partners give opposite messages on Auslink

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor has questioned the differing views of the National Party and the Liberal Party on the Auslink Transport strategy announced by the Federal Government on Monday.

"I'm a bit bewildered at the differing views of the Liberal candidate, Scott MacDonald and his National Party Senator and Coalition partner Sandy Macdonald.

Liberal candidate Scott is saying that we have missed out because we have an Independent in the seat and National Party Senator Sandy is saying how well we have done and claiming credit for the outcome.

Is the glass half empty or half full? Is one the eternal pessimist and the other the eternal optimist?

Whichever it is, I'm sure the people of the New England are confused about who to believe and whether we should be crying in our beer or popping the champagne corks over Auslink and the benefits to the New England electorate," Mr Windsor said.

The projects specifically mentioned for work on the New England Highway both to and through the New England electorate that will have benefit to people of the electorate as part of the National Highway include

- Devil's Pinch realignment \$19m
- Duval Creek Bridge replacement \$4m
- Realignment and safety improvements at Sunnyside north of Armidale \$9m
- Bridge-widening program on New England Hwy \$4m
- Road widening program on New England Hwy \$22m
- New England Hwy Weakleys Drive interchange planning \$24M
- Halcombe Hill realignment and safety works \$15m
- Muswellbrook By-pass \$5m
- A new connector between the F3 and the New England Hwy at Branxton \$253m

"The total spend on the New England Highway is \$355m.

There has also been a 73% increase in maintenance funding since 2001.

As the Liberals and Nationals are working out of the same election campaign office, you would think that they would be saying the same thing.

However, on this occasion, I am in agreement with National Party Senator, Sandy Macdonald," Mr Windsor said.

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