



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Community commitment gets Glen Severn Learning Centre funded**

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor said the announcement of the Federal Government funding commitment of \$309,000 to the Glen Severn Learning Centre was GREAT news for the communities of Glen Innes and Severn Shire showing that united community commitment and perseverance does pay off in the end.

“I am very pleased to see the \$309,000 Federal Government support for the Glen Severn Learning Centre announced.

The Federal funds are the last to be announced in the overall funding of the project with State Government, Glen Innes Council and Severn Shire funds, TAFE and UNE funding support as well as other community funds having been committed for over three years and will enable a more fully equipped facility to provide more comprehensive educational opportunities for the people of Glen Innes and Severn Shire.

I thank all these groups for maintaining their commitment to the project even to the point of making plans to proceed even if Federal funding did not eventuate.

These people have shown that perseverance and a united approach will win out at the end of the day,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor also recognised and thanked retiring Liberal Senator for NSW, Senator John Tierney for his support of the Learning Centre from day one and also to Richard Torbay, the Independent State Member for Northern Tablelands as well as the efforts of the New England North West Area Consultative Committee.

“Liberal Senator John Tierney has provided a great deal of advice both to me and the champions of the project from its beginnings as well as within the Parliament.

Richard Torbay also has worked successfully with the NSW Government Ministers and Departments to gain their support for this important community asset and gained untied State Government support for the project.

The Area Consultative Committee has been very helpful to the Committee too, with their staff providing good guidance to them and assisting with the preparation of their application.

I would also particularly thank the former Mayor of Glen Innes, Bob Dwyer and his former Council along with Severn Shire Mayor Robert Schroeder and former Mayor Malcolm Wehr and their Councils for their initiative in promoting the need for the Glen Severn Learning Centre in the first place and driving it with commitment and passion.

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The project then came under the role of Glen Innes Council Administrator Mr Frank Willan with whom I met to discuss the project. He also saw the need and value of the Centre to the community and further pursued funding for the project. For this I thank Mr Willan for continuing the hard work of the Committee,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor said that the history of the Glen Severn Learning Centre will show waxing and waning support for the project from National Party.

“History will show that the former National Party Member for New England, Stuart St Clair was against the project in the lead up to the last Federal election in 2001 and the National Party candidate for the State seat of Northern Tablelands, Peter Bailey went so far as to say that Glen Innes did not even deserve a Learning Centre.

It was a disgrace at the time but the backflip by the National Party now just goes to show what political competition can do in helping to elevate worthwhile projects up the funding priority list,” Mr Windsor said.

History will also now show that it has been the strong united community support from the people of Glen Innes and Severn that finally achieved the Federal Government funding support,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor said that funding should also now be announced for the National Equine and Livestock Centre in Tamworth which has been in a similar situation.

“The National Equine and Livestock Centre in Tamworth has been around for as long as the Learning Centre and has received an untied State Government funding commitment of \$3.35million as well as Local Government, community and industry support.

The Federal Government knocked back an application despite this support for it both financially and morally.

It’s time for this project to get similar recognition by an announcement of a commitment to fund it too,” Mr Windsor said.