



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Media Release

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Vision New England Summit an eye opener

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor has described last Saturday's Vision New England Summit held in Armidale as an eye opener for all participants.

"There were 57 resolutions agreed to by the 100 participants from 60 organisations across most aspects of community life.

By far the biggest concerns were related to health and disability services for both large and small communities.

For those in attendance who were not directly involved in some fields, it was a real eye opener to issues that other people in our communities face each and every day.

From that point of view alone, the Vision New England Summit process is a very good way of making more people aware of what is really happening in our communities and as a result more understanding of the needs of the community not only for development into the future but for meeting the immediate needs of people across the broad spectrum of our communities," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor also highlighted the discussions on Telstra, the Youth Insearch Program, our region's skill shortage and infrastructure development.

"The Telstra NO sale issue gained strong support with people concerned about what will happen to being part of the future new technologies, as well as the basic services if Telstra is privatised.

The Youth Insearch program presented by Tamworth Magistrate Mal McPherson received probably the greatest support by delegates as it has the potential to assist our young people at risk given adequate resourcing and people support.

The skills shortage issue has received strong support recognising that it is not only the professional skills shortage in medical, dental, veterinary and other long course qualifications that we need to address.

We also need to address the more blue collar skills that today are becoming more technical in terms of use of technology.

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The need for upgrading our infrastructure both within the region and to our region also received strong support from the delegates highlighting not only transport infrastructure but also the social and cultural infrastructure that make our communities great places to live,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor said that the theme for the day of ‘Setting our agenda’ has gone along way to do just that.

“Delegates to the Vision New England Summit put a lot of thought into their submissions and presented their concerns in a way that has gained broad community support.

In doing so, they have provided me and other elected representatives with our riding instructions as to what is important to them and what they want us to pursue on their behalf.

None of the proposals were outrageous in what they want to achieve and I will be circulating the final document to the other elected representatives at the Local, State and Federal levels to inform them of the direction our community members want us to take on these matters.

I thank all those who submitted their issues and attended the 2005 Vision New England and will report back to the community as and when steps are taken to achieve their desired outcomes,” Mr Windsor said.