



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Tax cuts or better services?

The announcement of \$34B in tax cuts by the Prime Minister yesterday has drawn the question from the Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor – Tax cuts or better services?

Mr Windsor is cautious about tax cut announcements when there is so much more that needs to be done in many essential service areas.

“Whilst I’m not opposed to tax cuts, it’s a matter of priority – if we cover our essential service needs then we can look at giving back to those who have contributed to getting us in that position.

People of the New England electorate have expressed to me in the past through one of my surveys that they would be prepared to pay a higher Medicare levy to have dental health services included as eligible for rebate particularly when there are 600,000 people in need of dental work.

There are other people, particularly those on the age pension, Veteran’s pensions, carers pensions and so on who live virtually below the poverty line and who haven’t been able to share in the nation’s prosperity through no fault of their own.

These people have no opportunity to benefit from jobs growth but still have to live in our society where the increasing cost of living means that their pension does not go as far as it used to.

With increasing petrol prices impacting on all aspects of our lives, surely these people need an increase in their income, not just a “bonus” at the whim of the Government of the time.

They need certainty of a regular income to be able to budget from day to day,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor believes that our current strong financial position as a nation needs to be used to set Australia up for long term national benefit not just for short term political gain.

“Our current strong national economic position, much of which has been generated by our mining industry boom, may not last forever so we need to use our current position to secure our future.

It seems to me and to many people in the New England electorate that whilst we all would like more money in our pockets, the priorities should be investment in our essential services that we all expect government to provide like health, education, telecommunications, transport infrastructure, environmental needs and the many other human services that go to making our communities better places that we can all share in and if there’s anything left over then we can get the surplus back as tax cuts.

Certainly rural and regional Australia would benefit from more investment and commitment to growing opportunities to be found here and I’m sure people wouldn’t begrudge staying on current levels of tax if they can see it going to providing for Australia’s future,” Mr Windsor said.

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