



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Budget should focus on inflation

Controlling inflation should be the major thrust of the Federal Budget to be brought down tomorrow night according to the Independent Member for New England Tony Windsor.

Mr Windsor, who has previously called for the Government not to proceed with its promised \$31B in tax cuts and also to scrap the Baby Bonus wants the Government to boost health, education, pensions and aged care spending and invest in training and future infrastructure needs.

“Inflation has been correctly identified as ‘public enemy number one’.

Increases in interest rates have seen previous tax cuts negated and also passed on to consumers in the cost of their purchases.

The situation is further compounded when skyrocketing fuel costs are added and passed on too.

People of the New England have told me that they would prefer better health and education services and the development of better infrastructure before further tax cuts and I agree with them.

I also see a great need to boost pensions so that our ageing can keep up with the cost increases.

It’s a real struggle for those who haven’t had the benefit of superannuation schemes throughout their working lives and even more of a struggle for pensioners who have lost their partner and still have to cover the same costs of maintaining a roof over their head.

With an ageing population, the Government should also make sure that our aged care facilities are meeting the needs of those in their care.

This means a better mechanism for funding these facilities regardless of where they are located and also attracting staff to look after our aged,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor is also looking for a long term commitment to addressing climate change and future water needs.

“Climate change is a sleeping giant that must be planned for now.

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We can't afford not to act and put in place measures that will achieve long term sustainability of our food and energy needs.

There are many ways of addressing the problem and we should be encouraged to act as individuals as well as corporately to achieve the desired outcome.

Improving renewable energy sources and better use of our water resources should receive research incentives as well as incentives to take up the technology.

Household solar and wind power plants have the potential to reduce base load electricity demands whilst geothermal, hydro and wave power can boost energy for industry use.

Growing our fuel will also bring about a reduction in our greenhouse gas emissions.

The introduction of urban water recycling activities and household water tanks will also help reduce the demand on our stressed river systems.

It's a small price for the Government and for each of us to pay to get on the right side of the climate change ledger," Mr Windsor said.