



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Local Government funding a welcome boost

Federal Government funding for Local Government projects across the New England electorate will no doubt be a welcome boost to local community infrastructure according to the Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor.

Mr Windsor believes that the announcement made by the Prime Minister Kevin Rudd in Canberra yesterday to the Australian Council of Local Government gathering is a good start to keeping economic activity happening particularly in rural and regional areas during the current global financial crisis.

“Local Government has a major role to play in keeping their patch as economically active as possible at the best of times however in the current global financial crisis its role becomes more important.

The funding announcement of between \$100,000 and \$1.295M for Councils in the New England will enable them to undertake some long overdue and much needed work on community assets which will enhance the liveability of the area and stimulate local economic activity.

I thank the Federal Government for recognising the role of Local Government in delivering services and assets to their communities and encourage Local Government Authorities to ready themselves quickly for its use,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor is also pleased with the way in which the funding has been allocated for the program.

“The allocation of funding has been done by way of formula based on population and size.

Doing it this way, the Government has taken out any criticism of funding to marginal seats or ‘mates’ which the previous regional development programs had levelled at them and were identified by the Australian National Audit Office as lacking process and transparency and indeed breaches of the Financial Management and Accountability Regulations Act 1997.

I am pleased that the Government has listened to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government of which I was a member.

The Committee recommended a greater role for Local Government in the delivery of Federal funding for local infrastructure needs and this announcement picks up on that,” Mr Windsor said.

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