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PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



MEDIA RELEASE

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Walcha to host Regional Tax Forum to look at tax reforms

A Regional Tax Forum to be jointly hosted by the Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor and the Independent Member for Lyne, Rob Oakeshott will be held in Walcha on September 8th to discuss reforms that could reduce compliance burdens and boost the economy.

Walcha is a mid-point on the Oxley Highway between Tamworth and Port Macquarie.

Locals from New England and Lyne, along with New South Wales and federal organisations, will be invited to discuss the issues raised by last year's Henry Tax Review.

Resolutions agreed to at the Regional Tax Forum will be noted by Mr Windsor and Mr Oakeshott, and taken to the Treasurer's Tax Forum on October 4th and 5th in Canberra for consideration.

A Tax Forum to consider the recommendations made by the Henry Tax Review was one of the conditions the Prime Minister agreed to as part of the negotiations with Mr Windsor and Mr Oakeshott in forming government.

Mr Windsor said that he would like to invite local people to lead the national conversation.

"The Henry Tax Review identified reforms that could boost productivity by encouraging more people into work, foster new business activity, and increase national output by around 2 to 3% each year.

"These reforms could boost wealth and increase living standards across the nation.

"And of course, it's hard to disagree with slashing red tape, simplifying the tax and welfare system and abolishing annoyance taxes like stamp duty.

"I was worried the government was passing up a golden opportunity to strengthen our economy by putting the Henry Tax Review on the backburner however I'm pleased the hung parliament has given us a chance to more fully consider its recommendations.

"The reforms are wide-reaching but some also have specific implications and possible benefits for country people. That's why it's important country people are actively involved in the discussion.

"I'd like to invite any local people or organisations who have an interest in participating in this discussion to contact my office for further details," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Oakeshott believes it is important that government understands the implications of current taxation policies on regional and rural communities, particularly on small business.

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“This is a great opportunity for regional businesses, interest groups and individuals to publicly express their thoughts, concerns and opportunities in relation to our tax system.

“There are many and varied viewpoints in our community on what does work and what might work better, and these views should be put forward for further consideration and scrutiny. The Regional Tax Forum provides a platform for those thoughts and ideas to be expressed.

“I would encourage anyone with a strong interest in how we can make our taxation system simpler and fairer, to collect their thoughts into a detailed submission and also consider attending the Regional Tax Forum.

“Further to the Regional Tax Forum, I will also be hosting a tax discussion in Port Macquarie, specific to small businesses within the Lyne electorate, and feedback from both the Walcha and Port Macquarie forums will be taken to the Government’s October Tax Summit,” Mr Oakeshott said.

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