



Bryan Green MP Labor Member for Braddon

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Labor

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Bryan Green Rallies Support for North West Paper Mills

Tasmania must do everything it can to maintain a viable paper industry. The proposition by the Wilderness Society that Tasmania can somehow do without these industries is outrageous.

The suggestion that the Government should not be prepared to support these industries and the description of a desire to help as 'sad' makes me angry.

The Wilderness Society and the extreme Greens might think it is ok to rationalise the industry to suit their environmental objectives but once again they are putting their politics before people.

The Tasmanian Government is working to keep these mills going and we don't need those efforts undermined by extreme environmentalists. We need a viable paper industry in Tasmania.

Treasurer Michael Aird has spoken to Paperlinx management and I have spoken the senior management of Australian Paper to get a picture of what we are dealing with.

There is the possibility that the Tasmanian mills can become a separate entity, Tasmanian Paper, with management reporting to Paperlinx but we have to look to solutions.

It will be important to have opportunities to ensure the mills operate profitably and jobs retained.

I understand the Reflex brand name can still be used by Tasmanian Paper, which is important given the carbon neutral status recently achieved by the recent release and launch by Premier Bartlett of the Reflex carbon-neutral office paper and as such is an important marketing tool for an industry that is renewable and its products recyclable

I can assure the workforce I will be doing everything in my power to help find a way to keep a viable paper industry on the North West Coast.

Greatest School Modernisation Program Ever

Premier and Minister for Education David Bartlett has revealed plans for the greatest school modernisation program in Tasmanian history.

Mr Bartlett said there was an urgent need to commence projects eligible for funding under the \$370 million Rudd Stimulus package.

"I want works to get underway in the first 35 schools by June of this year.

“This latest stimulus package provides us with an unprecedented opportunity to give our students the very best in learning facilities.

“If we are to extract every possible dollar from the Commonwealth’s latest stimulus package we must meet the very tight deadlines imposed.

“This means it will be necessary for principals and their Chairs to consult with their school communities and finalise plans for works by the 24th March.”

The Department of Education will begin working immediately with school communities to clarify priorities and design options.

“The global financial crisis poses challenges to all tiers of government across the globe.

“I can however reassure all Tasmanians that this Government will not abandon its commitment to education and our desire to lead the country on key educational measures.

“That is why School Resource Package funds, staffing formula funds and also funds for teaching staff to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes will all be quarantined from budget cuts,” said Mr Bartlett.

New Funds to Save the Tasmanian Devil

Premier David Bartlett announced recently up to \$400,000 State Government funding to assist in the fight to save the Tasmanian devil.

The funding would meet the building costs associated with housing the next three ‘Devil Island’ insurance populations at strategic locations within Tasmania.

The \$400,000 will be combined with funds raised by the Devil Island Project Inc.

Premier Bartlett said, “The successful conservation of the Tasmanian devil requires a major-co-operative effort across all levels of government, private industry and community.

Through partnerships the Save the Tasmanian Devil Program has established, good progress has been made in recent years in not only unlocking some of the mysteries of the Facial Tumour Disease but also implementing a range of actions to combat threat’ said Mr Bartlett.

For more information on Save the Tasmanian Devil and donate to the fund see www.tassiedevil.com.au and www.dpiw.tas.gov.au

\$6 Million Skills Program to boost Business Productivity

More than \$6 million has been committed to target skill shortages in Tasmania during 2009.

The Productivity Places Program, a joint Australian and State Government initiative, allow for Skills Tasmania to target training in various industries experiencing skill shortages including automotive, aviation, civil construction, building and construction, community services, finance, information technology and food processing.

Premier David Bartlett said that given our current economic circumstances, it is essential for businesses to take advantage of the opportunities that are available. The list of qualifications that may be funded under this program is extensive and provides opportunities to up-skill or re-skill staff, which in turn can bring efficiencies and boost productivity in the workplace.

A series of workshops would be taking place in February and March for both registered training organisations and industry.

West Coast into Braddon – official from 16th February 2009

Bryan Green today met with West Coast Mayor Darryl Gerrity to officially mark the day the West Coast of Tasmania becomes part of the electorate of Braddon.

Mr Green said that he had a good meeting with the Mayor Darryl Gerrity and General Manager Peter Harder and was looking forward to working hard for the people on the West Coast.

“We talked about a range of issues concerning the area, including the newly established economic group who will be meeting on Thursday in Queenstown,” Mr Green said.

“We agreed that myself and the Premier, David Bartlett will meet with the group to be briefed on employment opportunities on the west coast in light of the economic downturn.

“I am confident by working together we can continue to build and grown opportunities for the West Coast of Tasmania.”

State Liberals Have Missed the Bus Again – Flawed Free Bus Policy

The Tasmanian Liberals have grossly under-estimated the cost of its policy to provide free bus travel for seniors and for all students going to and from school.

The Liberals have costed their policy at around \$8.5 million a year.

In fact the policy is so unsustainable that the actual cost to taxpayers would be \$22.77 million a year.

What is worse is that such an ill-advised policy would deliver no improvement in bus services to any community – a need constantly highlighted and demanded by the community in the recent review of Core Passenger Services, one of the most extensive public consultation processes ever undertaken in Tasmania in which the Tasmanian community asked for bus services to be fairer and more consistent.

The question that needs asking of the Liberals, is how they intend to find the additional \$14.27 million per year to fund their policy – which taxes will they raise; which services will they reduce??

A Way Forward For Disability Services

A new operational framework has been launched to guide reform of disability services in Tasmania.

The Disability Operational Framework provides a clear direction for the future and sets out a clear set of principles to underpin the reform process. The reforms will place a greater focus on the individual requiring services; will strengthen individuals' informal support networks and families, and provide easier access to services for people with disabilities.

The future of disability services in Tasmania will see a shift towards greater inclusion for people with disabilities by working in partnership and enabling participation in their local communities.

There will be a focus on a more integrated and coordinated service system and the strengthening of referral pathways.

The Gateway Service will provide information and advice, intake, referral and demand management.

Rudd Package will Support Tasmanian Jobs and Deliver \$1 Billion Benefit

Under the Nation Building and Jobs Plan, Tasmania will receive approximately:

- \$370 million for education infrastructure and capital works;
- \$138 million for the construction of new public housing (which equates to up to 500 houses); and
- \$9.2 million for repairs and maintenance to existing public housing

The Tasmanian Government is ready, willing and able to roll out these infrastructure projects and begin capital works within months.

Local communities will also get a share of the additional \$500 million that has been made available nationally for community infrastructure projects such as town halls, libraries and community and sports centres.

“Kevin Rudd should be congratulated for the extraordinary leadership he has shown in such difficult times. I look forward to working with him to ensure this funding is delivered as quickly and effectively as possible” said Premier David Bartlett.

North West Tourism Backed by Government Action

North West Tourism will continue to receive vigorous support from the State Government by the announcement of \$23 million loop road through the Tarkine as the latest tourism related initiatives by the Government.

The great pity is that once again we see Will Hodgman and the Liberals launch straight into negative mode. Instead of getting behind developments on the Coast, they nit-pick and vacillate. No-one seems to know what they stand for.

In these tough times, people are looking for leadership

This Government has a proven track record on tourism development and it speaks for itself. Recently the Premier, David Bartlett, committed another \$1 million to the makeover of the Burnie waterfront and more than \$400,000 for the Stanley Town Hall.

To list a few recent funding allocations have gone to:

- Streetscapes in Latrobe, Penguin and Wynyard;
- The Axeman's Hall of Fame, Latrobe;
- The tourism entrance to East Devonport;
- Cradle Mountain;
- The Wonders Of Wynyard;
- \$15 million on the highway to Circular Head; and
- Sealing of the road between Marrawah and Arthur River

All of the above has been done in partnership with local government. It is a co-operative approach that gets results.

By contrast I find it bewildering that instead of embracing these developments and encouraging community growth the Liberals seem to oppose for the sake of opposing.

It's time they joined the Government in trying to build confidence on the North West Coast rather than trying to find reasons to object everything.

Go-Ahead for Tarkine Tourist Road

The \$23 million Tarkine tourist road has been given the State Government go-ahead by Premier David Bartlett. Meeting members of the Circular Head community in Stanley, Mr Bartlett announced the Government would build the road as a major driver for tourism growth in the region.

It is appropriate in these difficult economic times that the Government makes strong decisions to build for the future. This investment shows the Governments confidence in the future of tourism on the North-West coast and our confidence in the strength of the Coast's economy.

This project will provide employment and economic activity in the short term and provide a wealth creating asset for generations to come.

The Tarkine was made a forestry reserve on the initiative of the Tasmanian Government and this project will enable more people to experience the beauty it has to offer.

653 hectares of forest that were earmarked for harvesting will now be reserved forever. In other words, 100 times more area has been conserved than will be impacted by the construction of the short length of new road

The project involves the upgrading of 127km of existing gravel roads and tracks and completing 7.6km link of which 5.4km will require new roading.

It will take visitors from the Wynyard area, through forest, accessing the Tarkine's attractions and connecting with the end of the Great Nature Trail at Arthur River, to complete a tourist loop through to Smithton.

Funding Support for Early Years Initiatives

Tasmanians aged up to six and their families will benefit from a range of new projects in areas such as early literacy and numeracy, school readiness and supporting young parents.

26 projects would share more than \$310,000 funding provided through the Tasmanian Early Years Foundation 2008-09 Grants Program.

"The mission of the Foundation focuses heavily on working in partnership with the community to provide support for children and their families," Premier Bartlett said.

"The grant program is supporting a range of government, non-government and community organisations throughout Tasmania that understand the needs of their communities and have developed projects aimed at meeting those needs."

Mr Bartlett said investment in early years was crucial for Tasmania's future.

"We need to empower communities to build better futures and this means giving every Tasmanian child the best possible start in life as a foundation for a healthy and positive future," he said.

"The Tasmanian Government established the Tasmanian Early Years Foundation to provide strong leadership in this area.

"And my Government is supporting the Foundation's vision through initiatives such as the \$12.6 million Launching into Learning initiative, which supports parents as their child's first teacher, and our commitment to establishing 30 Child and Family Centres across the State."

Grant Recipients

Devonport Online Access Centre Inc, \$3,317: Young children will enjoy structured visits to the Library, Online Access Centre and Community House.

Zeehan Primary School, \$5,600: Literacy and numeracy awareness program.

Rosebery District High School and Mountain Heights Primary School, \$28,400: Leap Ahead Early Intervention Project to help at risk children.

Smithton High School, \$7,820: Plus 1 project to encourage the young mothers in the Smithton area to return to school with their babies, one day a week, to reconnect with education.

New North West Bus Service

A new bus service between Devonport and Ulverstone has commenced.

It represents yet another fine example of the positive outcomes arising from the Review of core passenger bus services across Tasmania. There are now more options and more connections for the North West Coast public.

This will enable people travelling between Devonport, Ulverstone and Burnie to connect with activities and essential services more easily.

The Review set out to ensure consistency, fairness and sustainability and to take passenger transport into the 21st century.

It paved the way for far reaching changes to the way in which bus services are delivered in Tasmania.

There was also a need to introduce new, secure contracts which would give operators an incentive to invest in new and better equipped buses.”

The Review had found gaps in services on the North-West Coast, including the need for improved timetables on urban fringe services so that the Coastal towns could benefit from a continuous general access bus service between Wynyard and Port Sorell.

The new service will link to the Ulverstone-Burnie service to provide a transport connection between Coastal communities.