



# Rebekha Sharkie MP

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**Your active, local voice in Canberra**



## Mayo Budget Matters

Welcome to the Federal Budget edition of our Mayo newsletter for the Adelaide Hills.

Bushfires, drought and the COVID-19 recession have left their mark on the economy in Mayo and contributed to the \$213 billion Federal Budget deficit. However, when I focus on the 13,000 small businesses in our community, I see reason for optimism in our resilience and our response to the Government's stimulus measures.

While by no means perfect, the JobKeeper scheme has played its part in cushioning the impact of COVID-19. Raising JobSeeker has also acted as a critical buffer. There was no change to the permanent rate of JobSeeker in the Budget but an announcement was foreshadowed. Our community needs the support of a liveable JobSeeker rate. The following is a snapshot of some of the Budget announcements.

### Wage Subsidy

The JobMaker Hiring Credit will give \$200 a week to employers who hire anyone aged 16-30, and \$100 a week for any worker aged 30-35. In addition, there is the \$1 billion JobTrainer program to provide low-cost training places for school-leavers and \$1.2 billion towards wage subsidies for 100,000 new apprenticeships and traineeships. The pre-existing Restart program gives employers up to \$10,000 to hire mature-age employees.

### Instant Asset Write-Off

Businesses with a turnover of up to \$5 billion will be able to write off the full value of any eligible asset they purchase and any losses incurred up to June 2022 can be offset against prior profits made in the last two years, to 2018/19.

### Income Tax Cuts

Legislated tax cuts have been back-dated to July 2020 and those refunds will be built into wages until the end of this financial year. Employees earning between \$45,000 and \$90,000 will end up with an extra \$1,080. Those earning more than \$90,000 will take home up to \$2,565 extra.



### Additional Payments

Pensioners, veterans, disability carers and eligible families will receive two cash payments of \$250 in December 2020 and March 2021.

### Aged Care

The Strathalbyn and District Aged Care facility was allocated \$700,000 for additional beds. I also welcome the announcement of an additional 23,000 extra home care packages, however, I am concerned that there are now over 130,000 people on the waiting list. I am also concerned about public dental spending and renew my call for a \$1,000 biennial dental voucher for pensioners.

### Mayo measures

Through Centre Alliance's direct advocacy to the Federal Government, I have been able to secure more than \$50 million worth of measures for Mayo, including: \$15 million for works at the Verdun freeway interchange; \$5 million for the Regional Aquatic Centre at Mount Barker; and \$2.6 million for the Amy Gillett Bikeway. See inside for more information.

**Rebekha Sharkie MP**

*Centre Alliance Federal Member for Mayo*



Rebekha third from left, stands outside the existing oval facilities with members of the Houghton, Inglewood and Hermitage Soldiers Memorial Park Shirley Warner, Karen Warner, Helen Atkinson, Margarete Ehrhardt, Han Robot, Joe Underwood, Polly Underwood, Helen Kroepsch, Brenda Stenhouse, Barry Miller, David Wark, Nat Young and Matt Thomas.

## Hub for Houghton

A 'community hub' can be built at the Houghton, Inglewood and Hermitage Soldiers Memorial Park thanks to \$600,000 in funding secured by Rebekha.

The funding, announced in the Budget, will cover half of the \$1.2 million cost of the project, which will be built as a second storey to the new changerooms planned for the oval.

"I'm really excited for the Houghton, Inglewood and Hermitage community. When these projects are finished, they will not only have modern facilities for local sport but also an accessible and well-designed gathering place for everyone in the local community," Rebekha said.

"Earlier this year they successfully applied for a \$400,000 State Government grant to build stage one. This \$600,000 will cover half the cost of Stage 2 and deliver a community hub that will be inclusive of everyone."

Houghton, Inglewood and Hermitage Soldiers Memorial Park President Matt Thomas said the funding would help the committee deliver on both stages of their master plan.

"This funding plays a significant part in enabling us to deliver on our master plan to build a new Multi-Use Community Hub which will dramatically improve our ability to engage with the community," Matt said.

## YOUR VOICE IN PARLIAMENT

As part of Centre Alliance, Rebekha Sharkie has responsibility for the following portfolios: Family and Community Services, Disability Services, Housing, Ageing, Indigenous Affairs, Veterans, Arts, Sport, Youth, Education, Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Environment, Foreign Affairs, Trade and Investment, Transport, Employment and Workplace Relations.

# Aged Care spending bill to be reviewed by Parliament

A Private Member's Bill introduced by Rebekha seeking greater financial transparency in residential aged care, has been referred to a Parliamentary Committee for review.

The Bill mirrors legislation introduced in June last year by Centre Alliance colleague Senator Stirling Griff that would have required aged care providers to disclose their income, costs of food and medication, staff and staff training, accommodation, administration and monies paid to parent bodies in annual financial transparency reports to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner.

"At the time the government was not interested in taking up the legislation. Senior

Australians and their families haven't lost interest and, in the interim, the impact of COVID-19 has only highlighted the under-resourcing in the sector," Rebekha said.

"In my time in office, I have been approached numerous times by constituents deeply worried about the quality of the food served to their loved ones and the number of staff available to help with feeding and hygiene.

"This legislation will enable families of loved ones, stakeholders and the public to have a clear view, for the first time, on the proportion of income that providers actually spend on costs of care and how much is just being pocketed or wasted."

## \$1M local TAFE investment

TAFE SA has been given \$1 million to upgrade its campuses at Mount Barker and Victor Harbor thanks to Rebekha's advocacy.

"This funding is urgently needed and I thank the Government for taking on board my submissions to upgrade TAFE SA campuses in our region, and setting aside money in the Budget," Rebekha said.

Much of the work needs to be done at the Mount Barker campus to bring the construction, automotive, community services, hospitality and business and IT facilities up to modern standards.

Around \$200,000 will be used at the Victor Harbor campus to upgrade facilities for forklift licensing and training in tourism and hospitality and community services.

## \$250,000 for bandicoot habitat

Landcare projects for a 'Bandicoot Super Highway' to boost the recovery of the endangered Southern Brown Bandicoot can now go ahead thanks to \$250,000 in Federal funding secured by Rebekha.

The money will go to the Sturt Upper Reaches Landcare Group (SURLG) to accelerate their 10-year project to design and support a range of conservation approaches on private and public land.

Danny Rohrlach, President of the Sturt Upper Reaches Landcare Group, said members were delighted and sincerely thanked Rebekha for efforts to secure the funding.

"This grant means that years of planning and fieldwork by the SURLG Committee, volunteers, local landholders and many others to rescue the Southern Brown Bandicoot from the brink of extinction will now kick into top gear," Danny said.



# BUDGET MEASURES SECURED FOR MAYO

## Centre Alliance projects

The Federal Budget confirmed the funding for projects secured for Mayo by Centre Alliance and formally announced last year including:

**\$7.3 million** for an environmental covers scheme for horticulturalist in Mayo

**\$2 million** towards the Mount Barker Sports Complex

**\$220,000** to rebuild the Gumeracha tennis courts

**\$200,000** towards installing 4GX equipment to improve mobile and data connectivity around Cherry Gardens

**\$200,000** for toilets and facilities at the Treetop Playground at Craighburn Farm

**\$130,000** for toilets at the Summertown Community Centre

**\$105,000** for Birdwood Netball Club changerooms

**\$85,000** for Trees for Life to rehabilitate Lions Park at Currency Creek and Meadows Creek Reserve

**\$75,000** to resurface the Woodchester tennis courts

**\$30,000** for a secure equipment shed for the Clarendon Netball Club

**\$10,000** for the Macclesfield RSL to construct a shelter at the ANZAC Memorial Garden.

## \$15M for Verdun interchange solution

The South Eastern Freeway is a step closer to having a more functional interchange at Verdun thanks to a \$15 million Federal Budget commitment secured through Rebekha's advocacy.

The funding is included in the \$200 million Hahndorf Township Improvements and Access Upgrade project. Final plans for the project are expected to be released for public consultation early in 2021.

"I welcome the Government's announcement of \$200 million for the Hahndorf Township Improvements and Access Upgrade project," Rebekha said.

"\$15 million of that funding was secured by Centre Alliance and our intention in negotiating that funding was to address the problems with the one-way Verdun freeway interchange. A better interchange is a priority project for our community.



*Rebekha beside the freeway interchange at Verdun.*

"After the Budget announcement I met with the Premier Steven Marshall, State Transport Minister Corey Wingard and Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT) officials to discuss how the interchange fits into their Hahndorf project.

"DIT is still working on geo-engineering and other aspects of the project and I have been assured that plans will go out for community comment early next year."

## \$1.6M for *headspace* youth mental health

Mayo will have its own full-service *headspace* youth mental health centre to service the Hills, South Coast and Kangaroo Island thanks to Rebekha's advocacy.

The \$1.6 million funding commitment for a Mount Barker-based service was announced in the Federal Budget. At present, local *headspace* services are co-ordinated from Murray Bridge.

"After lobbying in 2017 I was able to secure a satellite *headspace* service in Mt Barker and then a shopfront service for the South Coast with outreach to Kangaroo Island," Rebekha said.

"Now, finally, we have our own *headspace* centre, based in Mount Barker but expanding across the Fleurieu to KI.



*Rebekha is pictured at the recent celebration of Mt Barker's expanded headspace satellite service.*

"Our *headspace* satellite services are already full and with the pressures of COVID-19 demand will only increase."

## MDBA regional officer for Coorong and Lower Lakes

After long advocating for the Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) to have a permanent presence in the Lower Lakes and Coorong region, Rebekha has welcomed the announcement of a 'Goolwa Region Regional Co-ordination Officer'.

The Commonwealth-funded position was announced in September with the \$450,000 in funding directly secured by Centre Alliance.

"The environment and the communities

at the very end of the River face very different challenges and issues and they need their own representative," Rebekha said.

Rebekha said the Government needed to take the next step and set up a Murray River Research Institute in Goolwa.

"I have met with local authorities about the institute model and I have had positive discussions with the Government about the \$8 million needed for the project," Rebekha said.



# BUDGET MEASURES SECURED FOR MAYO

## \$5M makes a splash for aquatic centre

Rebekha has secured a further \$5 million towards plans to build a Mount Barker-based Regional Indoor Aquatic and Leisure Centre.

"With this \$5 million, the Federal Government has now committed \$15 million to what is estimated to be a \$30 million project for just Stage 1, so I am pleased that my advocacy has brought this project a significant step forward," Rebekha said.

"Mount Barker is a rapidly growing region and it lacks an indoor community aquatic centre.

"The ageing outdoor Mountain Pool is in a beautiful location and is held in great affection by the local community but it was built 60 years ago and it doesn't meet the needs of a growing population, particularly as it is only open during the short hills summer.

"An indoor facility catering for families, lap swimming and water therapy has been flagged by the community as something sadly missing from a major regional centre and this funding brings construction that much closer."

Stage 1 of the proposal involves the construction of a 25m x 10-lane lap pool; a 'learn to swim' pool; a leisure pool; warm water therapy pool; a gym and wellness centre and kiosk.

Mount Barker Mayor Ann Ferguson said: "We very



Mount Barker Mayor Ann Ferguson with Rebekha.

much appreciate the support of the Federal Government on this project and acknowledge their significant contribution to assisting us to deliver this for our community.

"This is a major facility for our region and I'm pleased that our community's advocacy has been heard by Rebekha Sharkie.

We will be working with our State Government representatives to secure their financial support to ensure this facility is delivered in a timely manner and meeting the needs of our community."

## \$2.6M accelerates Amy Gillett Bikeway

The Mount Torrens to Birdwood section of the popular Amy Gillett Bikeway can finally be completed thanks to \$2.6 million in Federal Budget funding secured by the Federal Member for Mayo Rebekha Sharkie.

"I have been advocating for Stage 4 of the Bikeway since I was first elected in 2016. It is a project often raised with me by our community so I am delighted that Centre Alliance could secure the funding."

Named in honour of South Australian cyclist Amy Gillett, who was tragically killed in 2005 during a training ride, Rebekha said the bikeway has been a fitting legacy to the elite athlete ever since Stage 1 was built in 2010.



"It also promotes the work of the Amy Gillett Foundation to improve road safety and awareness of cyclists," Rebekha said.

Amy's parents and founding members of the Amy Gillett Foundation, Mary and Denis Safe, welcomed the funding for Stage 4.

"As Amy's parents we are very excited that Stage 4 of the Amy Gillett Bikeway will go ahead," Mary Safe said.

"Many thanks to Rebekha's persistence, along with the Adelaide Hills Council and Federal Government for committing to this project."

Following the Budget announcement, Federal Finance Minister Mathias Cormann said: "The Australian Government is proud to provide nearly \$6 million in funding for local infrastructure projects in Mayo that will support communities and rebuild the local economy."

"Rebekha Sharkie's advocacy has played a key role in securing funding for these projects."

## Making Mayo Matter!

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