

# Parliamentary Agreement for the 9th Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory

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Sun, Oct 30, 2016 at 11:57 AM

## Parliamentary Agreement for the 9<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory

### This agreement is between:

Mr Andrew Barr MLA, Leader of the Australian Labor Party, ACT Branch

And

Mr Shane Rattenbury MLA, ACT Greens Member for Kurrajong, and

Ms Caroline Le Couteur MLA, ACT Greens Member for Murrumbidgee.

### Stable Government

ACT Labor and the ACT Greens will continue to provide the ACT with stable and effective Government. Subject to this Agreement, the ACT Greens will:

1. Support Mr Andrew Barr as Chief Minister of the ACT
2. Guarantee support for the passage of Appropriation Bills for the ordinary annual services of Government
3. Not move any motions of no confidence, or support any other party's no-confidence motions, except in instances of proven corruption, gross negligence, or significant non-adherence to this agreement or the Ministerial Code of Conduct

Further details regarding the agreement to provide stable government are at [Appendix 1](#).

### Agreed priorities and outcomes

Building on the positive outcomes for the Canberra community from the successful implementation of the Parliamentary Agreements for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Assemblies, ACT Labor and the ACT Greens agree to the following key shared priorities and outcomes. This reflects our shared agenda and is not an exclusive set of priority actions for either party.

Labor's wider policy platform is set out at [Appendix 2](#).

Agreed priorities for executive reform are outlined at [Appendix 3](#).

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**1. Action to improve Canberrans’ health and access to healthcare**

ACT Labor and the ACT Greens agree to continue to focus on giving patients the best care, and deliver services when and where they need them, so that Canberra remains Australia’s healthiest community. To achieve this goal, the parties agree to:

- 1. Design, construct and commence the operation of three nurse-led walk-in centres in Gungahlin, Weston Creek and the Inner North, based on the successful model currently operating in Belconnen and Tuggeranong; and assess the benefits of extending the centres’ hours of operation;
- 2. Establish the Office for Mental Health to roll out and oversee mental health services and provider funding, develop a strategy that sets targets for suicide reduction, and provide more support for young people;
- 3. Reduce the incidence of heart disease, diabetes, obesity and other preventable health conditions, by expanding and refocussing the Healthy Weight Initiative, appointing a Preventative Health Coordinator and developing a comprehensive preventative health strategy;
- 4. Improve dental treatment for those who can’t easily access it by operating two additional mobile dental clinics, and implement subsidy and opening hour policies to increase care for low income Canberrans;
- 5. Provide better healthcare for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders by building a new health clinic for Winnunga Nimityjah Aboriginal Health Service;
- 6. Increase frontline nursing staff to provide better healthcare services in hospitals and the community, by expanding Hospital in the Home, providing

more outpatient nurses, reviewing current ACT Health outpatient and community based services, and implementing incentives to raise nurse qualifications and career development opportunities; and

7. Develop a Nurse Safety Strategy through forums with stakeholders, focussing on high risk areas.

## **2. Supporting our schools and higher education**

ACT Labor and the ACT Greens:

1. Will continue to strongly advocate for the Commonwealth Government to honour the original six year Gonski funding agreement, in full, because the Gonski model of needs-based schools funding is the best chance for every Canberra child, attending a public, independent or Catholic school, to reach their full potential;
2. Recognise that the Canberra Institute of Technology should remain the primary provider of high-quality vocational training in the ACT, and commit to maintain the CIT under public ownership. The Government will continue to directly fund CIT to a minimum of 70% of total ACT Government funding for VET;
3. Agree that the Government will employ an additional 20 school psychologists over the term to strengthen mental health and wellbeing support in our schools, strengthen community based counselling services for children and young people, and implement a streamlined referral process that can be utilised by all schools;
4. Continue social and emotional learning programs in schools to enhance the skills of children and young people to engage in respectful relationships, including to prevent violence and sexual assault;
5. Employ an additional four senior teachers with expertise in pedagogy, learning difficulties, and literacy and numeracy programming, to implement a coaching and mentoring model to build teaching capacity; and conduct a trial of innovative teaching methods; and
6. Implement measures to improve road safety around schools, including the development of individual traffic management plans for every school.

## **3. Building an integrated transport network**

ACT Labor and the ACT Greens recognise that Canberrans support an integrated transport network comprising buses, light rail, roads, rideshare, taxis, cycling and walking. To achieve this strong network, the parties agree to:

1. Immediately commence community consultation, scoping and design work of Stage 2 of the light rail network, to progress the Woden Stage 2 extension to the procurement stage and contract signing in this term;
2. Encourage bus patronage by implementing free bus travel for seniors and concession card holders (excluding students) on all routes, and two months' free bus travel on new Rapid routes for all travellers;
3. Expand the reach and accessibility of the flexible bus service to the Inner North;

4. Implement new ACTION Rapid routes to provide better services through town centres and major destinations, as announced by Government prior to the election period and funded in the pre-election update;
5. Develop an ACTION fleet management strategy, with new and replacement buses to be purchased following evaluation of the sustainable fuels bus trial, prioritising green technologies such as hybrid and electric, and considering criteria including value for money and operational cost, environmental performance, energy efficiency and sourcing, and disability accessibility compliance;
6. Conduct a strategic assessment of innovative transport options for Canberra, including autonomous and semi-autonomous vehicle trials and better utilisation and connection of taxis and buses in off-peak periods;
7. Raise the profile of the Active Travel Office, and through the Office coordinate the rollout of \$30 million in additional priority footpath maintenance, cycling and walking route upgrades, and age-friendly suburb improvements in our shopping centres and existing suburbs;
8. Adopt the World Health Organisation's HEAT model for Budget assessment of active travel projects; and
9. Facilitate the establishment of bike hubs by the private sector (such as those operating in Brisbane).

#### **4. Improving social housing and housing affordability**

ACT Labor and the ACT Greens agree that that improving housing affordability is essential to ensuring secure accommodation is available to all Canberrans, and home ownership remains a realistic goal. To meet these aspirations, the parties agree to:

1. Continue the five year program of public housing renewal;
2. Develop a new Affordable Housing Strategy to deliver more affordable housing options;
3. Continue to cut stamp duty in every ACT Budget;
4. Create an innovation fund to support new approaches to affordable housing, starting with support to establish HomeGround Real Estate, Homeshare for older Canberrans, and the Nightingale Housing Model in Canberra;
5. Maintain a role for public sector land development with a board that includes independent members with skills from the social and affordable housing sector;
6. Set affordable housing targets across greenfield and urban renewal development projects, with structures to prevent resale windfall profits;
7. Work with community and business partners to construct purpose built accommodation for people experiencing mental health concerns and housing difficulties, utilising the 'MyHome for Canberra' project plan;
8. Grow and diversify the not for profit community housing sector, through a combination of capital investment, land transfer and other means;
9. Strengthen specialist homelessness and housing support services to make sure vulnerable groups (eg. older women, indigenous communities and women escaping violence) get the support they need; support people seeking housing who have a lived experience of trauma; fund professional development and training for the Specialist Housing and Homeless Service

Providers; and support Uniting City Early Morning Centre provision of essential services;

10. Convene a homelessness summit in 2017 bringing together all key stakeholders to develop innovative proposals to combat homelessness; and
11. Expand after hours and weekend intake referrals to homelessness services utilising the existing 'OneLink' service for a one year pilot program, and evaluate for continuation.

## **5. Better planning processes, consultation and outcomes**

1. Establish an Assembly Committee Inquiry into planning, to recommend amendments to the Territory Plan, ways to improve the planning process, consultation requirements, design and sustainability outcomes, energy performance, and range of housing options;
2. Strengthen community consultation processes, including through the use of deliberative democracy strategies, so that diverse views are taken into account in major project proposals;
3. Conduct a review of the effectiveness of the Energy Efficiency Ratings Scheme;
4. Actively progress discussions with the NSW Government and Yass Valley Council regarding moving the ACT/NSW border in West Belconnen;
5. Encourage Universal Housing initiatives by:
  - a. Holding a roundtable to develop incentives that will encourage construction of new homes and apartments that meet the Liveable Housing Design Silver and Gold Levels;
  - b. Developing training programs for architects and builders;
  - c. Showcasing Universal Housing in demonstration housing projects; and
  - d. Playing an active role at COAG to push for genuine progress on the 2010 COAG agreement (in the National Disability Strategy), for new housing to meet Universal Design Standards; and
6. Establish a panel of independent auditors to conduct mandatory annual audits of building certifiers through a self-funding model.

## **6. Protecting the environment and mitigating climate change**

ACT Labor and the ACT Greens reconfirm their genuine commitment to protecting the local environment, and doing everything we can as a community and city to combat human-induced climate change. To meet these goals, the parties agree to:

1. Continue all necessary policy and contractual steps to achieve 100% renewable electricity by 2020;
2. Sign the 'Under 2 MOU' and set firm interim targets to reach zero net emissions by 2050 at the latest;
3. Fund the ACT Environmental Defenders Office for at least two years from November 2016, while working with the EDO to develop sustainable wider revenue streams;
4. Establish a container deposit scheme and install 100 recycling bins around the city, to increase recycling rates and improve the amenity and health of our waterways and parklands;

5. Roll out micro parks in urban areas and establish an 'adopt a park' scheme to increase amenity and usage of local open spaces, and work with the community and private sector to reduce the heat island effect in urban areas, expand the urban and street shade canopy, and replace ageing trees;
6. Conduct an assessment of a Sustainable Bonds scheme to fund sustainable infrastructure;
7. Undertake a regulatory impact statement into setting minimum EER standards for rental properties by the end of 2017, with a view to implementing measures to improve energy efficiency of rental properties;
8. Develop a four year program to deliver weed and pest animal control;
9. Undertake a feasibility study into establishing a new northern Canberra region National Park, including existing nature reserves around Mount Majura, Mount Ainslie and Mulligans Flat; and
10. Implement the key findings of the Waste Feasibility Study so that ACT waste management is national best practice.

## **7. Making our community even stronger and more inclusive**

ACT Labor and the ACT Greens understand that government has an active and positive role to play in making sure everyone in our community is supported, welcomed, and has the opportunity to reach their full potential. The parties therefore agree to:

1. Develop a carers strategy in close consultation with Carers ACT, disability groups and other affected community members;
2. Create a new policy unit to monitor and support the roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, oversee grants to improve the ability of people with disabilities to participate in mainstream community groups, better support parents of children with disabilities; and a resourced Disability Reference Group to include people with disabilities and to address access issues for transport and new developments;
3. Establish an ongoing Multicultural Advisory Board to assist with the implementation of the ACT Multicultural Framework; and convene a multicultural summit;
4. Conduct a program to increase community access to government facilities, such as school halls;
5. Establish a Drug and Alcohol Court and associated support programs as part of a goal to reduce recidivism by 25% by 2025, continue existing funding of justice reinvestment programs and assess the need for any additional funding as part of the budget process;
6. Introduce an ACT Rights of Victims Charter; and
7. Continue existing funding for community legal services and assess the need for any additional funding as part of the Budget process.

## **8. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People**

ACT Labor and the ACT Greens are committed to supporting Canberra's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, and the parties will continue to work with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body and Indigenous organisations to ensure we deliver the best possible outcomes. This commitment includes:

1. Continuing funding support for dedicated culture and language programs in schools and after-school programs; and
2. Ensuring cultural connections are considered in planning and heritage assessments.

## **9. Reducing harm from gaming**

1. Reduce the number of electronic gaming machine licenses in the ACT to 4000 by 1 July 2020;
2. Explore further harm reduction measures, including mandatory pre-commitment systems and bet limits for electronic gaming machines;
3. Increase the Problem Gambling Assistance Fund levy from 0.6% of gross gaming machine revenue to 0.75%, and direct additional funds into addressing problem gambling; and
4. Review the current community contribution scheme, with a view to maximising the direct benefit to the community from the scheme.

## **10. Strengthening government, parliamentary and electoral integrity**

Canberrans are entitled to have confidence that their government is working in their best interests at all times. ACT Labor and the ACT Greens agree to implement a package of reforms that will build on measures previously implemented to improve probity, integrity and accountability in decision-making in the Territory:

1. Establish an Independent Integrity Commission, broadly structured on those operating in similarly sized jurisdictions, following a Parliamentary Committee inquiry into the most effective and efficient model for the ACT;
2. Effective immediately, neither party will accept donations from property developers, and the Government will bring to the Assembly a legislative ban on all such donations based on bans operating in other jurisdictions;
3. Establish a Select Committee to review the operation of the 2016 ACT election and Electoral Act, and make recommendations on lowering the voting age, improving donation rules and reporting timeframes, and encouraging more people to enrol, vote and participate more widely in political activity;
4. Through the Assembly process, expand the scope of the lobbyist register to capture in-house government relations staff, industry associations, and project management liaison officers and companies, and conduct a review of its effectiveness after one year; and
5. Strengthen the Commissioner for Standards' role by streamlining the referrals process for complaints against MLAs.

Further reforms of the Executive are set out at [Appendix 3](#).

## **11. Emergency services and law reform**

1. Progress jointly-committed investment in fire-fighting equipment, personnel and facilities, and establish a rigorous ongoing consultation process, including through a roundtable meeting, to discuss wider resourcing, structural and organisational reform, and increasing diversity in the fire-fighting service;

2. Undertake legislative reforms to expand the definition of domestic violence in the Crimes Act to include emotional and social violence; and implement any outstanding ALRC recommendations on sexual assault;
3. Establish an ACT medicinal cannabis program in 2017, to allow sick and dying people timely and efficient access to medicinal cannabis products, on prescription; and establish appropriate regulations, administration and education and training to ensure the programme is effective; and
4. Bring forward a submission for Cabinet consideration to enact a 'right to appeal' law.

## **12. Public Infrastructure**

Social, city and economic infrastructure is essential to keep Canberra liveable and productive, and to strengthen its reputation as a leading international artistic and sporting city. ACT Labor and the ACT Greens agree to progress major infrastructure projects:

1. Complete Stage 1 of Light Rail from Gungahlin to the City;
2. Construct Stage 2 of the Belconnen Arts Centre, to allow a wider range of use by community, artistic and performance groups;
3. Progress feasibility and business case development work on the Australia Forum convention centre and a new Canberra Theatre; and
4. Undertake feasibility studies into the construction of two multi-purpose indoor sports centres in Woden and Gungahlin.

## **13. Animal welfare**

1. End the ACT Government subsidy to the ACT greyhound racing industry at the conclusion of the current MOU, and actively support the transition steps required to end the operation of the greyhound racing industry, including animal welfare and training support; and
2. Expand and ensure the effectiveness of cat containment, and increase funding for cat de-sexing.

## **Appendix 1: Commitments to deliver Stable Government**

This Appendix provides further details of the agreed position on providing stable and effective Government for the ACT through the 9<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

### **I. Commitment to fiscal responsibility**

The parties confirm their commitment to fiscal responsibility and the maintenance of a balanced budget through the economic cycle.

### **II. Commitment to Policy Program**

The parties agree to support or deliver the initiatives as they are described in this Agreement, unless a written agreement to vary the initiative is signed by both parties.

### **III. Appointment of an ACT Greens Minister**

Once appointed as Chief Minister Andrew Barr will appoint Shane Rattenbury as a Minister.

A review of the Cabinet Handbook will be undertaken to support appropriate information sharing.

Any changes to Ministerial Portfolios to be undertaken with at least a week's notice, and with consultation on the draft Administrative Arrangements Orders.

### **IV. Cabinet decision-making**

Based on the successful use of the process as outlined in [Appendix 2](#) of the 2012 Agreement, the Greens Minister will vote with the Government in the Assembly on all matters that he has agreed to support in Cabinet.

Following Cabinet discussion of any matter of serious concern, the Greens Minister will either:

- a. Agree to support the proposal
- b. Agree to support the proposal in principle but reserve the right to move amendments or advocate a different position during the debate on the matter in the Assembly; or
- c. Vote against the proposal (other than for the ordinary annual services of government)

Once the Greens Minister advises that he reserves the right to move amendments, advocate a different position or vote against a proposal, he shall excuse himself from further Cabinet discussion on the proposal. The Greens Minister is entitled to explain his position publicly.

### **V. Executive Members Business**

The Standing Orders will continue to allocate time during each Assembly sitting week to allow Executive Members business that has not been submitted to Cabinet to be debated in the Assembly, as it currently operates.

### **VI. Parliamentary Staffing and Resources**

The ACT Greens will be provided with staffing resources sufficient to undertake Ministerial, and wider Assembly and Electorate duties.

### **VII. Provision of information**

Information and regular briefings and written responses to specific questions will be provided by directorate officials to the ACT Greens MLAs both about matters arising under this agreement and other matters as requested by the ACT Greens MLAs.

Greens MLAs will be invited to any roundtables and stakeholder forums outlined in this agreement.

### **VIII. Public communication of initiatives**

ACT Labor will provide notice to the ACT Greens MLAs before any public announcements involving items from this agreement, and will acknowledge the ACT Greens and this agreement in any public communications about items from this agreement. The ACT Greens Minister will provide equivalent notice to the ACT Labor Minister should they be responsible for delivering the agreement item.

### **IX. Speaker, Committees and Other Roles in the Assembly**

The ACT Greens will support ACT Labor's nomination for Speaker.

The parties agree to establish seven Standing Committees. As reflected in the Latimer House Principles, the Opposition will Chair three committees (including the JACS and Scrutiny of Bills Committee and the Public Accounts Committee), the ALP will Chair three committees, and the Greens will Chair one committee. Committees will comprise two Labor Members, two Liberal Members, and the Greens Member if she chooses to join the committee.

ACT Labor will support the ACT Greens' nomination for Chair of the Planning Committee.

ACT Labor will support the ACT Greens' nomination for Chair of the Select Committee to establish an Independent Integrity Commission.

The ACT Greens will support ACT Labor's nomination for Chair of the Select Committee on the 2016 ACT election and Electoral Act.

### **X. Review of this Agreement**

The Head of Service will provide a quarterly report on progress of the Agreement to Greens and Labor MLAs.

The parties will review the implementation of this Agreement every six months, and make a public statement on progress every year.

### **XI. Amendment**

This agreement may be amended by agreement between the parties. Any proposed amendments shall be put in writing by the party making the proposal. The parties will undertake discussions of amendment in good faith.

### **XII. Dispute Resolution**

The parties will, in the event of a perceived non-adherence of this agreement, notify the other party in writing immediately. Following written notification the parties will meet as soon as practicable and act in good faith to resolve the dispute.

## **Appendix 2: ACT Labor Policy Platform for the 9<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

ACT Labor took a clear and comprehensive policy platform to the 2016 election, focussing on delivering better healthcare services, improving education facilities and outcomes, creating and supporting secure and wellpaid jobs, and building essential transport infrastructure for a growing city.

Along with the policies outlined in the Parliamentary Agreement, ACT Labor will implement the following policy priorities through the 9<sup>th</sup> Term of the Legislative Assembly:

### **1. Healthcare**

ACT Labor has released a comprehensive 10-year health plan to improve healthcare for every Canberran, with the key components:

- Commencing construction of a Surgical Procedures, Interventional Radiology and Emergency (SPIRE) Centre on the Canberra Hospital campus
- Expanding the size and services within the Centenary Hospital for Women and Children
- Undertake a scoping and design study for longer-term new and expanded Northside hospital facilities.
- Upgrade Calvary Public Hospital, starting with an expansion to the Emergency Department.
- Establishing a capital grant program to construct three new bulk billing medical practices
- Boosting frontline nursing staff and healthcare services in the community
- Setting an ambitious 90% organ donation rate by making it as easy as possible for Canberrans to donate organs.

### **2. School Education, Tertiary and Vocational Education**

Key elements of our 2016 education policy platform include a \$100 million investment in school facilities, new and expanded schools in the growing communities of Molonglo and Gungahlin, electronic tablet/notebook devices for every public high school and college student, and a \$6.9 million investment in new psychologists to strengthen our support for mental health and wellbeing in our schools.

A re-elected ACT Labor government will immediately continue the task of advocating that the Commonwealth government honour the original six year Gonski funding agreement, in full.

Having grown the ACT's higher education economy to \$2.7 billion per year and employing 16,000 people, Labor will also build on Canberra's reputation as an international higher education and research hub.

### **3. Strong economy and job creation**

ACT Labor will continue to strengthen and diversify the local economy by investing in encouraging more direct international flights, tourism events, encourage innovative new enterprises, and boost capability in areas of Canberra's competitive advantages like research and higher education.

ACT Labor will maintain the size of the ACT Public Service, and public servants will continue to see their wages increase at a rate equivalent to CPI – real wages will be maintained.

### **4. Better transport network and suburbs**

Labor's plan for an integrated transport network and better suburbs includes:

- Completion of Stage 1 of light rail, to commence operation in early 2019, and commencement of design and scoping of Stage 2 to Woden.
- \$141 million for key road duplications, upgraded intersections and additional road resurfacing across Canberra to keep our city moving.
- A cycling tourism strategy and new Belconnen Bikeway to promote cycling and make riding a bike easier around the Belconnen town centre.
- Improved road safety around schools, including employment of lollipop officers at 20 of our busiest school crossings.
- The rollout of green bins for garden waste to every suburb.
- A free bulky waste pick-up service once a year for every household.
- More vital city services like mowing, weeding, footpath upgrades, graffiti management and rubbish collection.

### **5. Reducing homelessness and creating better housing options**

ACT Labor is continuing to grow social housing to better cater to Canberrans in need and those at risk of homelessness, as well as providing housing options and realistic home ownership avenues. This term, Labor will continue this work by:

- Building Common Ground 2 at Dickson to provide secure accommodation for homeless people and those unable to access the Canberra housing market
- Restructuring the Land Development Agency to focus exclusively on greenfields development and meet affordable housing targets.
- Responding to the needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community with a second dedicated, culturally appropriate older persons housing complex.

### **6. Social inclusion and participation in community life**

Labor will keep Canberra the world's most liveable city by supporting our vibrant, welcoming, multicultural, cohesive and inclusive community. Canberra is and must remain a place where all people feel valued, where differences are respected, and where people genuinely connect with each other.

Labor's goal is to make sure our agenda of active social inclusion is shared across all areas of government, and deliver support programs that make a real difference for those in need.

ACT Labor supports an active, healthy local community and we have a strong track record of making the right investments in suburbs across Canberra to support local sporting groups. We will implement measures to foster participation, especially by women and girls, and make sure our growing suburbs continue to have access to high quality sporting facilities.

In addition to existing community levies, the Labor Government will establish an independent charitable fund to distribute nominated community funds to charitable and community causes levied on venues operating electronic gaming machines in the ACT.

ACT Labor will deliver the largest single increase in arts funding since self-government, to reflect the value art and artists provide to our local community.

We will establish an office of LGBTI Affairs within the Chief Minister's Directorate to provide whole of government advice on LGBTI issues.

And Labor will maintain Canberra's reputation as inclusive and welcoming for everyone, by funding refugee support programs, and services for our LGBTIQ communities.

### **Appendix 3: Executive Reform**

1. Conduct a review in 2017 of the Budget process, to improve community input to Budget decision-making in future years;
2. Significant Bills will be presented to Cabinet and the Assembly with full Human Rights compatibility statements and a summary of community and stakeholder consultation;

All explanatory statements will be drafted in consultation with Parliamentary Counsel Office and produced in a consistent format as outlined in the "Guide to writing an explanatory statement", Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee, March 2011, which is due for review;

3. Allow all Members to seek independent formal advice from the Human Rights Commission, including human rights assessment of non-executive bills, without the requirement to receive permission from, or provide notification to the Attorney-General;
4. Undertake disability and gender impact analysis as part of the triple bottom line framework, and ensure that all relevant staff are trained in TBL analysis;
5. Amend the Planning Legislation to require that Territory Plan variations are referred to the planning committee, with a decision by the Committee within 15 working days as to whether it will conduct an inquiry; and
6. Require that reports received by the Minister from the Environment Commissioner are tabled in the Assembly within three months of the Minister receiving the report.