

Jeff Seeney MP eNewsletter 2017 - edition 2

Welcome to another edition of my eNewsletter. I hope you will find the information of interest to you.

Topics covered in this issue include; growing needs of schools, a new Farm Debt Reconstruction Office, succession planning grants and the Federal Government's bridges renewal program.

Labor fails to meet growing needs of schools

It is clear Labor doesn't have a long-term plan to meet the growing needs of schools across south-east Queensland.

Its recent announcement is nothing more than desperation from a government that has done nothing for school infrastructure for more than two years.

Instead of investing more in our schools, Labor shifted \$191 million out of the education and training budget* back into the kitty for whole of government priorities

To date, their only answer has been to install more demountables.

It was the LNP that established the Schools Planning Commission, which helped secure 10 new schools for south-east Queensland through the Public Private Partnership (PPP).

The LNP delivered a record \$600 million worth of funding for school maintenance to keep our schools in top shape.

This is in stark contrast to Labor, which cut at least \$25 million from the school maintenance budget every year.

The LNP also established independent public schools and in 2014 alone we invested an extra \$131 million through the Great Results Guarantee program.

*** LABOR BUDGET 2016**

Department of Education and Training Year on Year cuts as detailed in the 16/17 budget - (31.5) (42.7) (53.3) (63.7) - total (191.2)

<https://s3-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/s3-media-budget/pdfs/budget+papers/bp4/bp4-2016-17.pdf>

LNP delivers new Farm Debt reconstruction Office

The LNP has delivered milestone changes to help struggling farmers facing debt with key amendments to see the introduction of a new Farm Debt Restructure Office in Queensland.

The LNP's changes will establish the new office to tackle farm debt head-on under the authority of The Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority.

The LNP is focused on delivering for farmers who are doing it tough, and by successfully moving amendments we established the Farm Debt Restructure Office to give them the help they need.

The office will provide a process for the efficient and equitable resolution of farm business debt matters between mortgagees and farmers.

A key aspect of delivering a resolution to farmers will be providing professional staff to aid farmers in financial distress with advice and ways to improve their profitability.

There are farmers and graziers who need our help – particularly in western Queensland where they are suffering from continued failed wet seasons and have little or no cash flow to service debt.

The LNP has acted because we are aware of the lack of professional debt restructuring services and the lack of suitable loans, and we believe the LNP's changes will help rectify those issues and help struggling Queensland farmers.

The LNP's amendments will also see banks and other rural lenders compelled to provide data on lending and associated debt.

We need to know the extent of this debt so we know how big this issue is for the Queensland farmers who are doing it tough, and because the banks stopped providing information we are flying blind.

The clear message to the banks and other lenders is stop the nonsense and provide the data on debt levels, which is simple enough to do.

Succession planning grants

Queensland producers now have access to grants of up to \$2500 to help tackle family business and succession planning.

Farm Management Grants will help producers' access professional advice on these important matters.

With the Farm Management Grants, producers seeking professional advice in relation to succession planning, or a family member wanting to acquire an interest in the family business, can apply for a rebate of up to 50% of fees paid for the advice, with a maximum of \$2500 per applicant, per financial year.

Advice must come from a suitably qualified professional adviser such as an accountant, financial planner or solicitor.

Eligible applicants who received eligible professional advice can apply for a rebate on fees paid for the service through www.qraa.qld.gov.au or Freecall 1800 623 946

Federal Government's Bridges Renewal Programme Round Three now open to repair or replace local bridges

DO you know of a rickety bridge in your community that's in desperate need of repair or replacement? Be sure to nominate bridges in poor condition to your local council so they can be fixed with the help of Federal Government funding.

Federal Member for Maranoa David Littleproud said a new round of funding, under the \$360 million Bridges Renewal Programme, was now open and encouraged local councils and the community to be involved to make sure we get our fair share of funding.

"There are 17 local government areas in my electorate and I want to make sure our region takes advantage of this great opportunity to fix or replace ageing bridges which link our transport network," Mr Littleproud said.

"Councils can get on board by nominating local bridges and residents - who would like to put forward their ideas - should get in touch with their council to find out about any bridge nomination plans to make sure we get the most out of this infrastructure funding.

"Better bridges improve safety and access for communities and keep the road freight sector powering on, delivering dollars into the pockets of local businesses and supporting jobs.

"By working together with governments at all levels - particularly local councils which often need a hand to get big-ticket projects underway - we are upgrading and repairing bridges in all corners of the country.

"In Queensland, the state and local governments are eligible to apply for up to \$5 million per project in Federal Government funding, which is a great injection into local infrastructure."

Under Round Three of the Bridges Renewal Programme, nominated projects will go through a competitive merit-based selection process with successful applicants eligible to receive up to 50% of project costs or \$5 million.

Round Three is open until May 15, 2017. Guidelines and proposal forms are available at www.infrastructure.gov.au/bridges
