

## Austin Evans Statement

Last night I rang Helen Dalton to congratulate her on her victory in the Murray electorate. Of course, I am disappointed in the result, but the people of Murray have voted for a change in representation and I respect that decision.

I am so grateful to all those volunteers and supporters who gave so much time and effort to help our campaign.

It has been just 17 months since I was elected, and it has been such a privilege to represent and deliver for the communities I love.

In modern day politics, we often focus on the dollars delivered, but for me I am most proud that we reopened Pooncarie School after a seven-year recess. It might not be a multimillion-dollar project but the effect it will have on that community is something you can't put a dollar figure on.

Having said that, I have enjoyed working closely with our local councils to deliver funding for critical projects across the electorate.

I might not be there to cut the ribbon, but I was proud to fight for and secure the funding for important projects like:

- The \$244 million redevelopment of the Griffith Base Hospital;
- \$6.2 million for a Connected Learning Centre in Deniliquin;
- \$3.65 million for a brand-new Griffith Community Centre;
- \$1.6 million upgrade for the Gol Gol Water Treatment Plant;
- \$907,000 for a brand-new Finley Emergency Department;
- \$8.4 million for the Wentworth Aerodrome;
- Bringing the TAFE NSW Shared Service Centre to Griffith, providing 60 local jobs;
- \$20 million for the Barham MPS;
- \$3.9 million for the Roxy Theatre redevelopment in Leeton; and,
- Improved sporting facilities right across the electorate including the Regional Sports Precinct in Griffith and the Leeton Pool.

The Murray electorate will also continue to benefit from a strong and stable Liberal National Government that prioritises small businesses, families and farmers. In particular I will be proud to see a number of my commitments delivered, including:

- Multimillion-dollar upgrades to the Leeton and Deniliquin hospitals;
- Establishing a Citrus Centre of Excellence;
- Sealing the Dickie and Boorga Roads;
- 273 more frontline health staff across the electorate;
- A new TAFE Connected Learning Centre for increased education opportunities in Hay;
- \$25 million to investigate the Bradfield and other similar schemes;
- \$640 million for the raising of Wyangala Dam; and
- 20-year Strategic Plans for each valley to underwrite early season reliability.

My Nationals colleagues in Government will continue to deliver great projects for people right across regional NSW such as the Regional Seniors Travel Card, the Regional Growth Fund and local community projects through the Stronger Country Communities Fund. Additionally, our huge health infrastructure program will continue and schools right across the state will benefit from having their maintenance backlog wiped and air-conditioning installed. All investments in our communities made possible by the Nationals in government.

Lastly, I want to thank my wife Demi and my sons for their support as I poured myself into this job over the past 17 months. I've spent countless hours in the car travelling the second largest electorate in this state, from Barooga to Buronga, and it has been an absolute honour.

Thank you for the privilege to serve.

**ENDS**

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