

Michael McCormack MP

Delivering for the Riverina & Central West



Federal Budget newsletter – June 2024

How regions fared in Labor Budget

The 2024-25 Budget handed down by the Labor Government is an election sweetener that doesn't adequately address the key issues affecting Riverina and Central West residents.

It is most certainly "a typical Labor Budget" — regional, rural and remote Australians are but an afterthought for this Government. Only the Coalition will stand up and fight for the best interests of those who live, work and raise their families in the regions.

The Coalition's Budget in Reply outlined its plans to bring down inflation, ease the housing crisis and restore the Australian dream.

Riverina and Central West residents are certainly worse off now than they were when the Coalition was in Government.

There is no doubt Australians are struggling. Australians are now poorer than they were two years ago. Rent and mortgages are at all-time highs, the cost of groceries is significantly higher than it was two years ago, aspiring first homebuyers feel as though they are losing the race to save for a deposit and our GDP per capita has been in decline for the past three quarters. In fact, the average Australian with a mortgage is now more than \$35,000 worse off.

There was hope that the Budget would go further to address these important issues affecting all Australians, but our regional, rural and remote communities have been largely left high and dry.

Many economists have expressed concern the Budget fell short of expectations and may even inflame inflationary pressures.

Labor's attempt to lower the cost of living – a \$300 rebate or \$75 a quarter – will do little to help those struggling to make ends meet. In fact, the average annual electricity bill has increased by up to \$1,000 since Labor took office.

I'm pleased to say the Liberals and Nationals are putting together a comprehensive suite of policies to take to the next election to steer the country in the right direction to get it back on track.

In his Budget in Reply speech, Opposition Leader Peter Dutton revealed some of the policies Australia needs to make pragmatic steps to ensure the regions not only survive this cost-of-living crisis but thrive on the other side of it.

It is this commonsense perspective which will deliver a stronger, more secure and sustainable nation.

Australia cannot continue to go down a spending black hole which has lifted by \$315 billion over three Labor Budgets, equating to \$30,000 per household.

Australians are crying out for affordable housing, cheap, reliable and safe energy, as well as a clear direction to re-establish itself on the world stage as a nation in which everyone can prosper.

Michael McCormack

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Federal Member for Riverina

Shadow Minister for International Development and the Pacific

- ✗ \$300 energy rebates to artificially conceal inflation.
- ✗ Mobile Blackspot Program scrapped from 2026-27.
- ✗ Corporate subsidies for "green energy" billionaires.
- ✗ Too little support for young Australians wanting to buy their first home.
- ✗ Labor's water buyback plans hidden.
- ✗ Fresh Food Tax on farmers to subsidise overseas imports.
- ✓ \$1 billion for domestic violence crisis housing.
- ✓ \$925 million to support domestic violence victims leave violent relationships.
- ✓ \$5 million for Parkes intermodal terminal business case and planning.



THE NATIONALS *for Regional Australia*



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Liberals and Nationals offer a real alter

Labor's Budget digs us deeper into inflation hole, households hurting

Under Labor, Australia's inflation is worse than the US, Singapore, Germany, Spain, Japan, the Netherlands, Italy, South Korea, Canada, France and the entire Euro area.

Australians know that despite Labor's spin, prices have increased by nearly 10 per cent, with increases for many essential items since Labor took office, including:

- Housing has increased by 12%
- Rent has increased by 12%
- Insurance has increased by 26%
- Electricity has increased by 18%
- Gas has increased by 25%

After two years under Labor, a typical family with a mortgage is now more than \$35,000 worse off.

In these uncertain economic times, Australians needed a back-to-basics economic agenda.

Until we see a real economic plan from Labor to sustainably tame inflation in a credible way, and grow the economy, then Australians will continue to go backwards under Labor.

The Albanese Labor Government has failed for the third time to address the source of the inflation and cost of living pain being felt by families and businesses right across our country.

Australians deserve better.



Soaring power prices artificially concealed by papering over cracks

In May, prior to handing down the Budget, Treasurer Jim Chalmers made a big call, declaring he predicts inflation to drop below 3 per cent by December this year — in defiance of the Reserve Bank's own estimates which predict the return to target to take a year longer.

It's now clear how Labor plans to attempt to achieve this — by artificially concealing inflation by giving every household a \$300 handout, funded by Australian taxpayers.

Australians want an ongoing reduction in power prices, not a \$300 pity payment in recognition of Labor's failure — and lack of attempt — to achieve its 2022 promise, made 97 times, of a \$275 cut to power prices. A policy such as this is simply a poorly veiled attempt to buy your vote in the upcoming election. Instead of bringing prices down, they've just stuck the bill on the nation's credit card, to be paid for by taxpayers in the future.



Regional and rural medical professional shortage shunned

Labor has allocated \$90 million to make it easier to bring in international health practitioners, but we need a long-term solution; we need to ensure we are training enough health professionals right here in Australia — that's what I advocated for in the former Liberal and Nationals' Government.

The Coalition delivered the \$95.4 million Murray-Darling Medical Schools Network which saw five rurally based university medical school programs established across regional New South Wales and Victoria, including the soon-to-be-completed UNSW Biomedical Sciences Centre in Wagga Wagga.

The Coalition saw the value in training Australian doctors in regional Australia, with the intention they would stay in regional Australia when they graduate.

I'm disappointed to see Labor hasn't put the same thought into seeking a long-term solution to our health professional shortage as the Coalition did.

This is particularly so when Labor changed the Distribution Priority Areas for General Practitioners in 2022 to include some of the outer suburbs of Sydney and Melbourne, as well as Newcastle, Wollongong, the Gold Coast and other major centres. This sends a signal to budding GPs or somebody who had already been operating in a regional centre that they could go and hang their shingle in one of those areas and the result is it leaves country centres high and dry.

Domestic violence victim support welcomed, more needs to be done

The Budget's \$1 billion towards providing accommodation for women and children fleeing domestic violence is welcomed, particularly in light of recent events which have shaken and saddened the Riverina and Central West.

I have written to Minister for Women Katy Gallagher to request our region receives the due investment it deserves as part of this funding.

I also welcome the \$925 million for the Leaving Violence Program — a continuation of the rebadged Escaping Violence Program established by the former Coalition Government in 2021.

It is to be hoped the money goes to where it is most needed, such as frontline counselling and support, and not spent on rebranding, graphic design and unnecessary bureaucracy.

Alternative to Labor's Disappointing Budget

Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme extension welcomed by Coalition

The Coalition has welcomed the Budget's \$3.4 billion to add life-saving medicines to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

However, as part of Labor's changes, some people will pay more for scripts as Labor is scrapping the option for chemists to discount the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme medicine charge by \$1.

Instant asset write-off needs boost

Labor has again announced an extension to \$20,000 instant asset write-offs, this time until 30 June 2025.

Whilst I welcome this announcement, more needs to be done to support small business, which is the backbone of our regional economy.

The Coalition commits to increasing the limit to \$30,000, a restoration of pre-pandemic levels.



Housing affordability affected by Labor's big Australia agenda

Labor has also been wilfully ignoring immigration levels in its attempt to artificially keep up economic growth, purely through population increases, whilst our productivity is going backwards.

This surge in population has put significant strain on our housing stock and needs to be better managed to help address our housing crisis.

In just two years, the Government has brought in an additional 923,000 migrants but we've seen only 265,000 homes built, according to available data. This is not to mention overcrowded schools and infrastructure networks.

Never before in Australian history has net migration been so high. In February this year alone, we saw net migration of more than 105,000 people.

A Coalition Government will reduce net overseas annual migration to 160,000 and permanent migration from 185,000 to 140,000 for the first two years as well as implement a two-year ban on foreign investors and temporary residents purchasing existing homes to provide aspiring Australian homeowners some reprieve as well as support getting the appropriate infrastructure and housing supply in place first — instead of perpetually playing catch-up.

Money for Parkes intermodal terminal business case

Parkes is set to receive \$5 million for a business case and progression of technical and environmental planning for an intermodal terminal which will support the Inland Rail project delivered by the Coalition.

When delivered, I hope this will help boost the economy of Parkes by being a key freight hub.

However, I'm also still calling upon the Government to ensure Inland Rail is completed in full, all the way from Melbourne to Brisbane.

Labor's subsidies for billionaires

Labor is planning to provide \$13.7 billion in corporate subsidies for billionaires through hydrogen and critical mineral tax credits.

The Coalition will not support Australian taxpayers propping up an industry which should be able to stand on its own.

It is no secret Labor has been captured by the "green energy" lobby who expect someone else to foot their bill.

Instead, the Coalition commits to adopting the sensible position of 20 other top economies in the world by embracing the use of zero-emission nuclear power.

Now is the right time to be having the discussion about the prospect of nuclear power.

Doubt cast on Murray-Darling Basin farmers and river communities

Labor has seen merit in the former Coalition Government's Future Drought Fund and has allocated \$519.1 million over eight years into the fund.

This is something I certainly welcome and know many farmers will be appreciative of this investment.

However, whilst Labor may sometimes give, it always taketh, particularly from irrigation communities.

Farmers in the Murray-Darling Basin are right to be worried as a result of Labor's Budget, in which the funding allocated to the Murray-Darling Basin Plan was hidden and marked "nfp" (not for publication).

This should send shivers down the spines of irrigators across the region, because we know Labor has a track record of disregarding farmers' concerns and it is happy to spend billions of dollars in reclaiming water, taking it away from food and fibre production as well as job creation in river and irrigation communities.

Labor needs to come clean with exactly how much it plans to spend buying productive water.

UNSW Wagga Wagga Medical School nears completion

It's almost here — the \$21 million University of New South Wales Biomedical Sciences Centre in Wagga Wagga has just topped out, reaching its highest point, and will soon be supporting local medical students to study, from start to finish, to be a doctor in the region.

This new facility forms part of the \$95.4 million Murray-Darling Medical Schools Network, something which had been long called-for and I was proud to deliver whilst Deputy Prime Minister in the former Coalition Government. As part of the network, we have seen five regional medical schools established across the basin, improving rural health outcomes and delivering more rural doctors.

I spoke with first-year medical student, Wagga Wagga's Maddi Ingram, who told me how beneficial this medical school will be for local students, saying she intends to practise locally when she completes her studies.

It's all about ensuring country people have access to the same opportunities and outcomes as those in the cities — and that's what my National Party colleagues and I will continue to fight for.

The Murray-Darling Medical Schools Network has always been a vision of mine and I can't wait to see the UNSW Biomedical Sciences Centre open later this year and start delivering lasting outcomes for our region.

Nationals' Building Better Regions Fund continues to deliver

The Building Better Regions Fund, established by The Nationals in the former Coalition Government, has just delivered a reconstruction and upgrade of Lord Baden-Powell Drive, part of the Botanic Gardens Precinct Renewal project.

From the fund, \$4.3 million in Federal funding was delivered to support the precinct upgrades which include: Development of the Museum of the Riverina; Entwine at the Botanic Gardens and; the Lord Baden-Powell Drive Upgrade.

Unfortunately, after coming into Government, Labor decided to scrap the wonderfully successful Building Better Regions Fund — a fund which delivered \$1.15 billion in grant funding to 1,293 projects, driving economic growth and building stronger regional communities.

Across the Riverina and Central West, more than \$54 million in funding was delivered via the fund and its predecessor, the National Stronger Regions Fund, including: The Lachlan River Water Supply Duplication Project; New Sewage Treatment Works at Gundagai; Temora Aerodrome upgrades and; the Parkes Main Street Revitalisation.



SAFER JOURNEYS: With (from left) Wiradjuri Elder Aunty Mary Atkinson, Senator Deborah O'Neill and Wagga Wagga Mayor Cr Dallas Tout in front of the newly completed Lord Baden-Powell Drive upgrade.



MORE DOCTORS FOR THE REGIONS: The UNSW Biomedical School in Wagga Wagga is taking shape and will be used to train doctors for the regions later this year.



MUCH FANFARE: Students and stakeholders from the University of New South Wales as well as key members of the project team and representatives from building contractor Lipman celebrated the milestone.

Dunns Road opened

March brought great news for residents of the southern Wagga Wagga area, with the \$8.3 million investment to upgrade Dunns Road being delivered and officially opened.

Delivered in partnership with Wagga Wagga City Council, drivers in the southern Wagga Wagga area can now enjoy 3.3 kilometres of newly paved road as well as upgraded intersections with the Olympic Highway and the Holbrook-Lloyd Road.

I have been steadfast in my support for this project, originally committing \$2.5 million of Federal funding in the 2016 election and extending the Coalition's commitment to \$5.8 million at the 2019 election, whilst also increasing the scope of works.

These much-needed new upgrades are projected to facilitate an increase in road usage to 1,000 vehicles per day, which will now enjoy safer and smoother journeys along this useful shortcut.



GOAT TRACK NO MORE: The Nationals have delivered on its promise to pave 3.3 kilometres of road, supporting increased and safer usage of Dunns Road.

Federal Funding delivered for Cowra Study Hub

I was pleased to announce university students in the Cowra region are set to benefit from more than \$700,000 of Federal funding to help keep the Country University Centre (CUC) in Cowra open well into the future.

Funding was secured under Cohort 4 of the Regional University Study Hubs Program, for which I was proud to advocate and support CUC Cowra's funding application.

CUC Cowra has already proven its value to the community which, despite not being open for even a year, already has 73 students using its facilities.

The community and students both benefit, improving flexibility to study, whilst keeping young and innovative students in the region working and filling labour shortages.

With initiatives such as this, no longer are aspiring students forced to choose between moving to the big city to study or to give up on their educational aspirations.

I am hopeful of seeing more towns in the Riverina and Central West benefit from a study hub.

Almost \$1.8 million secured for local Veterans

Our Veterans deserve the best in support and facilities – a nearly \$1.8 million Federal Government funding boost secured last year will help Wagga Wagga organisations, RSL LifeCare's Riverina Veteran Wellbeing Centre and Pro Patria Centre, continue to deliver the help our Veterans need and expect.

This funding came after more than a year of advocating for Labor to match a \$5 million commitment from the Liberals and Nationals to deliver a Veterans' Wellbeing Centre for the Wagga Wagga region.

Whilst this funding was certainly highly appreciated, we must always ensure our Veterans have the support they need and deserve.



BIG NEWS: Veterans, their families and supporters from across the region joined Minister Matt Keogh and I for the funding announcement.



A COMMUNITY ASSET: In addition to providing passenger services, Wagga Wagga Airport is an important facility for Defence, pilot training, emergency services and industry.



Wagga Wagga Airport interim lease extension secured

After persistent lobbying of the Defence Ministers on behalf of Wagga Wagga City Council and the broader community, I have secured a one-year lease extension, until 30 June 2026, for Wagga Wagga Airport to give Council more time to liaise with Defence to find a workable outcome.

This followed meetings I had with the Defence Ministers on 29 February, 25 March and 16 May.

I have always seen the significant value the airport provides Wagga Wagga and surrounds, which is why during the 2022 Federal Election, the Liberals and Nationals made a commitment to deliver \$24 million to upgrade the airport and its terminal if re-elected to Government.

Wagga Wagga City Council's original position was to seek ownership of the airport. From May 2022, Council resolved to seek a long-term lease renewal rather than outright ownership but, under new Commonwealth rules, a lease of more than 20 years requires a public tender process.

Whilst in Government, the Liberals and Nationals delivered Wagga Wagga Airport more than \$1.7 million for updated lighting, \$405,000 for security screening equipment and offered Council more than \$3.7 million for capital works associated with enhanced screening.

Currently, \$561.9 million worth of upgrades to RAAF Base Wagga, originally secured by the former Coalition Government whilst I was the Assistant Defence Minister, are also soon set to start. This will bring innumerable economic benefits to the region, as well as ensure the facility is state-of-the-art and fit-for-purpose. Our best and brightest airmen and women deserve nothing less.

I will continue to advocate and work with the Council and my Federal colleagues to ensure Wagga Wagga and its residents get a desirable outcome in regard to the lease of Wagga Wagga Airport.

I stand with the Council's vision to develop Wagga Wagga to its full potential and will do my utmost to ensure it has the vital infrastructure to support the population goal of 100,000 by 2038, including a state-of-the-art airport.

PRODUCTIVE MEETING: With (from left) Geoff Breust from Wagga City Aero Club, Wagga Wagga Mayor Cr Dallas Tout and Ben Morgan, CEO of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association of Australia, after discussing concerns about the airport's future.

Grants galore

Volunteer Grant recipients

Bribbaree Brigade NSW Rural Fire Service	\$2,403
Brookdale Bluebells Women's Football Club	\$2,950
Cootamundra Swimming and Lifesaving Club	\$4,380
Forbes NSW Small Winemakers Wine Show	\$1,000
Grenfell NSW Rural Fire Service Weddin HQ	\$2,350
Lachlan Valley Railway Society	\$4,500
Naradhan P&C Association	\$3,654
Parkes Musical and Dramatic Society	\$5,000
Peak Hill Bowling Club	\$5,000
Pleasant Hills Community Association	\$5,000
South Wagga Wagga Rotary Club	\$5,000
Temora St Paul's Anglican Church	\$1,850
The Rock and District Touch Association	\$3,064
Wagga Wagga Cycling Without Age	\$4,912
Young Combined Hockey Association	\$4,000
Young Society of Artists	\$1,000
TOTAL	\$56,063



NSW SMALL WINEMAKERS' ASSOCIATION, FORBES: With association president Mark Watts who will use the \$1,000 to purchase a colour photocopier.

Riverina and Central West receives \$56,000 to support volunteers

As we all know, community organisations and the wonderful volunteers involved in them form the backbone of our strong and vibrant communities. However, it can be very difficult for some clubs and organisations, particularly those in the smaller villages and towns in the Riverina and Central West, to raise money for vital equipment to keep volunteers safe or to improve their services to the community.

Fortunately, across the Riverina and Central West, 16 organisations were successful in their application for grants valued between \$1,000 and \$5,000.

This funding will make a world of difference to the volunteers who make such important contributions to our community.

Among the equipment to be purchased under the grants are barbecues, groundskeeping equipment, first aid equipment and electronics.

It was so heart warming to hear the wonderfully positive reactions from organisation representatives when I told them their applications had been successful.



LACHLAN VALLEY RAILWAY SOCIETY (above): With (from left) Director and Operations Manager Cowra Tourist Railway Cass Mendham, Cowra Depot Manager Ian Cameron and Cowra Locomotive and Rolling Stock Maintenance Manager Simon Bowden. Lachlan Valley Railway Society will use its \$4,500 to purchase a new sandblasting cabinet.

FIRE PROTECTION (right): A \$2,350 Volunteer Grant has been provided for the NSW Fire Service Weddin headquarters.



More than \$10 million secured to deliver community infrastructure

The Riverina and Central West will receive more than \$10 million in funding under the Growing Regions Program which will deliver new community infrastructure in Wagga Wagga, Cowra and Parkes.

Wagga Wagga City Council

Wagga Wagga City Council is set to receive \$4,493,776 to develop the Lake Albert Water Sports and Event Precinct, part of which will include the remediation of the foreshore, the installation of pumps and pipes as well as upgrades to the existing Lake Albert weir and spillway system.

This project is absolutely vital and I was pleased to support Council in its endeavours to secure funding for it.

Wagga Wagga Mayor Cr Dallas Tout described the funding as “fantastic” and it is hoped, with this investment, infrastructure will be put in place to mitigate the risk of blue-green algae outbreaks — and I know this is something which has been long called-for by the community.

We saw just recently how important a clean, full lake is, with the staging of the Barry Carne Memorial Interstate Ski Race Challenge at which visitors from near and far came to enjoy the best the lake has to offer.

I want to see families enjoying the lake, participating in water sports as they once did and using it to its full potential as a hub for community events.



HOW'S THE SERENITY: *Wagga Wagga's beautiful Lake Albert.*

Cowra Shire Council

I'm also pleased to see Cowra Shire Council will be allocated \$4,890,218 to rebuild the Cowra Aquatic Centre.

It was well known the facility was ageing and damaged; and Council just didn't have the money available to deliver any upgrades.

Cowra Mayor Cr Ruth Fagan said Cowra Shire Council had been “waiting for the funding for so long” and that it was “so exciting” to see the funding delivered.



EXCITED: *Parkes Shire Council representatives and stakeholders looking forward to work commencing at the wetlands.*

Parkes Shire Council

Parkes Shire Council is also set to benefit from \$943,738 secured for bird-hides and boardwalks in the Parkes Wetlands.

The Boardwalks and Bird Hides: Elevating Parkes Wetlands project will support habitat creation and promote tourism at the wetlands.

The Parkes Wetlands are situated on the site of the town's old sewage treatment plant maturation ponds and were finally converted into wetlands in August 2023, thanks in part to the former Liberal and National Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program.

It is great to see an innovative use of a defunct facility and the reclamation of land for environmental purposes which benefit the whole community as well as ecological diversity.



GREAT NEWS FOR COWRA: *With Cowra Mayor Cr Ruth Fagan at Cowra Aquatic Centre.*

More needed to support victims of violence

The reinstatement of funding for the Wagga Women's Health Centre (WWHC) is welcome news, but more needs to be done to secure long-term funding and bolster critical funding which has been saving women's lives in the region.

The community rallied around the WWHC when the funding cut became public and, thankfully, common sense prevailed and this vital resourcing was restored. However, the funding was extended for just another 12 months and still leaves significant instability in the future of this service and does not address the three-to six-month waiting list for counselling services. Long-term and increased funding is needed to ensure adequate support is available for women and their children in the Riverina when and where they are needed.

The community's passion for real and long-term solutions to domestic and family violence was demonstrated when hundreds of people attended a National Rally Against Violence in Wagga Wagga on 28 April.

This was followed by the hand-over at my Wagga Electorate Office of hundreds of letters calling for more to stop domestic and family violence. I brought the letters to the attention of Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and the Minister for Women, Senator Katy Gallagher, ensuring the voices of our community were heard at the highest levels of Government.

The day after the Budget was handed down, I wrote to Minister Gallagher urging her to ensure the Riverina and Central West received equitable funding from a \$1 billion National Housing Infrastructure Facility designed to support housing for women and children experiencing domestic and family violence.

The regions simply cannot be forgotten in the Government's response to this social crisis. Women and children experiencing violence in rural and regional Australia are at a distinct disadvantage compared to city victims. Help is not always available and it can be difficult for women escaping their



PLEA FOR HELP: *Receiving some of the hundreds of letters calling for more to be done to address domestic and family violence from WWHC Director Johanna Elms.*

abusive partners to find safe houses to move to in their country town.

I have also urged Minister Gallagher to guarantee funding for the WWHC will be ongoing. Without this guarantee, it creates instability for the future of this service.

The establishment of the \$925 million Leaving Violence Program is welcome, but will not substitute for guaranteed funding for the WWHC as the program is tied to courts and eligibility is limited, which means women seeking assistance through the health centre will not be able to access this funding.

Mobile Black Spot funding goes down Labor's regional black hole

The Budget papers confirm funding for mobile connectivity programs for regional Australia will cease from 2027-28.

This includes the highly successful Mobile Black Spot program which has delivered mobile phone towers throughout the Riverina and Central West and the Better Connectivity Plan which covers funding for a range of programs including for on-farm connectivity and the Regional Tech Hub.

Funding to the Peri-Urban program is also being culled. It provides funding to improve mobile connectivity in bushfire priority areas along the edges of Australia's major cities.

The Budget papers also reveal plans by Labor to increase funding for mobile connectivity in time for the election year, before it diminishes and gives zero continued funding from 2027-28 for mobile connectivity programs on which people rely.

Regional Banking Inquiry delivers recommendations

The Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee has handed down recommendations at the end of its inquiry into bank closures in regional Australia.

Sadly, we have seen the loss of banking services throughout the Riverina and Central West, and wider regional and rural Australia, leading to the need for the inquiry.

The Committee has made eight recommendations for the Government to consider, including the Government adopt a policy recognising access to financial services as an essential service. The Committee said to this end the Government should commit to guaranteeing reasonable access to cash and financial services for all Australians.

I trust the Government will seriously consider these recommendations which will go a long way to shore up banking services in regional and rural communities.

Any measure which would help shore up banking services in rural and regional areas must be seriously considered, including the establishment of a publicly owned bank if deemed feasible.

Banks need to be accountable to the country communities and customers who have supported them.

I welcome the recommendation of investigating the feasibility of re-establishing a public bank, which Australia had before the Keating Labor Government privatised the Commonwealth Bank, which could, at the very least, increase competition in regional markets.

Regional communities deserve to have the same access to services that metropolitan areas take for granted.

It is incumbent on banks to invest in the regional and rural communities which invested in them, particularly through agribusiness. Whilst there is a move towards online banking and digitising everything, it is still fundamentally important that face-to-face banking services in regional centres remain for those who have relied on this way of banking for many, many decades, including the ability for people to conduct cash transactions.



WELCOME MOVE: *The Commonwealth Bank has made the decision to keep regional branches open until at least the end of 2026, including its Junee branch.*



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Authorised by Federal Member for Riverina, The Hon. Michael McCormack MP, The Nationals, Suite 2, 11-15 Fitzmaurice Street, Wagga Wagga, NSW 2650.

Printed by Chambers Whyte Design and Print, 5 Rabaul Place, Wagga Wagga, NSW 2650.