



Fixing Labor's mess

TREASURER Joe Hockey has released the Government's mid-year economic and fiscal outlook (MYEFO), which Prime Minister Tony Abbott described as Labor's last - and only truthful - budget statement.

That is because the dire numbers are overwhelmingly a result of decisions and policies of the previous ALP government.

Key features of MYEFO are:

- Next year's Budget deficit will be \$47 billion, not the \$30 billion Labor predicted before the election.
- Deficits will add up to about \$123bn over four years compared to the \$20bn Wayne Swan's promised in his final budget earlier this year.

Despite the appalling figures, the Liberal and Nationals Government is determined to keep faith with Australia and implement its election promises, including those made to regional Australia.

The Abbott-Truss Government is getting on with the job of delivering its plan to benefit regional Australia.

It is working to improve lives in regional communities, including:



Treasurer Joe Hockey and Nationals Leader Warren Truss.

- Scrapping the Carbon and the Mining taxes
 - Undertaking an inquiry into Australia's childcare system.
 - Building the infrastructure and roads of the 21st Century.
 - Launching the Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper for a strong future.
 - Finalising the Farm Finance package ensuring greater support for agriculture.
- The Nationals in Government are determined to deliver for regional Australia.

Fruit processor in Canberra talks

While the announcement of a special high level panel set up to investigate assistance to SPC Ardmona and report to the Federal Government is welcome news, the Goulburn Valley food processor is far from out of the woods.

I invited SPC Managing Director Peter Kelly to Canberra last week to brief

Nationals members and senators, as well as other interested Coalition members.

Mr Kelly outlined the company's plans for new products, workforce consolidation and technological upgrades as part of the briefing.

The Productivity Commission has just

completed its report on SPC's application for emergency support.

Cabinet is still considering the request for federal funding.

For more information, go to the Productivity Commission's website, www.pc.gov.au and click on "Processed Fruit Imports".





Senator Bridget McKenzie

Christmas 2013 Newsletter



OUT AND ABOUT



Campaspe Shire citizenship ceremony with Mayor Ian Maddison (right).



CEO of Mallee Family Care, Vernon Knight, presenting the organisation's annual report to Bridget in Parliament House.



At the Elmore Field Days with Nationals members and Victorian Nationals Local Government Minister, Jeannette Powell (right).

I wish you all the peace, joy and happiness of the season. Merry Christmas!

You can stay up to date and let me know your thoughts through my web page at www.bridgetmckenzie.com.au, my Facebook page or by following me on Twitter, @senbmckenzie,

Bridget



Australia Post inquiry



Australia Post and its relationship with licensed post offices is now the subject of a senate inquiry, following representations which I and my Nationals colleagues made on behalf of many licensees who are struggling due to outdated pricing regimes.

Licensed Post Offices face increasing parcel volumes and declining letter numbers, with pricing structures which do not reflect the workload.

We need to ensure regional communities can continue to be served by licensed post offices which are sustainable and profitable well into the future.

Agriculture White Paper

Agriculture Minister Barnaby Joyce recently announced the Agriculture White Paper, which will look into agriculture investment, growth and jobs.

We need to encourage a strong agricultural sector with a sustainable future.

The government will first release an issues paper that will call for public submissions. This input will be taken into account in a Green Paper, which is expected to be released in the first half of 2014.

Public submissions will be called for the Green Paper before the final White Paper is developed.

This is a great opportunity to have your voice heard in planning for the future of our agriculture industry.

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