

Bendigo Newsletter

A better Bendigo



Senator Bridget McKenzie with candidate for Bendigo, Sarah Sheedy and Acting Leader of the Nationals in the Senate, Fiona Nash

When I was elected as The Nationals Senator for Victoria in 2010, I could have set up my electorate office in Melbourne like other Victorian senators.

Instead I chose Bendigo, because the Nationals and I believe Bendigo and surrounding communities are the heart of Victoria.

As the only party exclusively dedicated to fighting for the regions, The Nationals understand the issues that are important to regional Victorians.

As the Chair of the Bendigo Youth Innovation Centre, Sarah Sheedy is already fighting for a better future for Bendigo.

The Nationals are committed to:

- Ensuring equality of access for regional Australians to health services and education. No one should miss out because of where they live.
- Investment in regional areas. Regional cities like Bendigo and smaller local towns need investment in infrastructure to secure a prosperous future.

- Providing stable and trustworthy government and a strong economy. Businesses and households in the Bendigo electorate need security and stability from the Federal Government.
- Greater scrutiny on foreign investment in Australian farm land. We need to protect our national interest while ensuring a positive future for our agriculture sector.

Bridget McKenzie

The Nationals are standing up for you in Canberra.

Regional Education

The Nationals want to see a greater focus on education in regional areas, as well as better incentives for attracting skilled educators to the regions. The Nationals also see education as critical to addressing the skills shortage facing the agriculture sector.

Small Business

No sector of the economy has been harder hit under Labor than small business. Small business received zero compensation for the carbon tax; small business has to compete with online retailers from overseas which are exempt from the carbon tax and the GST. No wonder more than 10,000 Australian companies entered insolvency administration last year.

The Nationals in Government will cut company tax for small businesses by 1.5 per cent to 28.5 per cent. We will also slash the red/green tape burden on small business by \$1 billion annually.

Labor debt and deficit

Despite all of Labor's promises to deliver budget surpluses, it has handed down record deficits in each of the past six years, including \$30 billion this year. The result is that Australian Government debt is heading for \$400 billion. Only a Coalition Government will get the nation's finances under control.

Sustainable environment

The Nationals recognise that the people who live and work in regional areas are heavily invested in the environment and see it as critical to balance the needs of the environment, people and business. Our environment and resources are precious and need to be managed accordingly, but we must take into account human activity too. Our practical approach to environmental policy is diametrically opposed to the hysterical, nature-centric approach of The Greens.



Foreign Investment

We know that foreign investment is good for Australian agriculture and vital for industry growth. But we need to know more about who is buying significant portions of land in Australia. There needs to be more transparency so we can protect our national interest. More purchases should be scrutinised by the Foreign Investment Review Board and there should be a national register of foreign acquisitions.

Greens with envy

In 2010, The Greens forced then PM Julia Gillard to break her “no carbon tax under the Government I lead” promise.

With Labor's slide in the polls, it is worth considering which extreme policies the Greens would force upon a possible Rudd-Milne Labor-Greens Government.

Greens policies tend to be extreme and not particularly beneficial to the environment.

The Greens don't like culling of feral pests and their policies include “stronger regulation of *legal* firearms based on genuine need”. The Greens will

decide who needs a legal firearm and it is hard to imagine who might qualify.

The Greens want the use of hard drugs like heroin and “ice” to be decriminalised and only incur “civil sanctions”.

The Greens love taxes and not only want to increase the carbon tax but also a new \$11 billion tax on bank deposits.

The Greens also want to tell local farmers how to do their job, banning what they consider “farming practices that are inconsistent with animals' natural behavioural needs”.