

News Release Minister Geoff Brock

Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Local Government

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Federal Budget cuts to hurt regional SA

Regional Development Minister, Geoff Brock says the Federal Budget does no favours for the people of regional SA.

“People living in our regions will be worse off and I have real concerns about the economic and social impact of this Budget on our regions, particularly on the quality of our education system and on health services across the State,” Mr Brock said.

“I’m very concerned about the negative impact of increased petrol price in the regions where people need to travel greater distances just to go about their everyday business.

“The \$18 million per annum cut to Federal Government local road funding only affects SA putting us at a major disadvantage,” Mr Brock said.

“This can only mean local councils will struggle to keep up their essential road maintenance programs on our rural roads.

“In addition, approximately \$60 million in cuts to Local Government Financial Assistance grants over the next three years will impact on council services and most likely result in rate increases.

“The \$39 million package I negotiated for regional SA next financial year as part of my agreement with the Premier now comes into real focus because of the severity and magnitude of the Federal Budget cuts across the board.

“There’s a very real opportunity to use this funding in a positive way to keep confidence flowing in our regions and increase job opportunities.”

Mr Brock said cuts to concession payments, changes to the pension and a GP co-payment were also concerning for regional communities.

“Seniors living in our regions will struggle even more through the pension changes which will be indexed to the cost of living and not wages.

“As well, I’m also worried that many people, particularly those with families, will consider delaying visits to their local doctor because of the increased cost of treatment.

“I acknowledge the Federal Government has committed to retaining its share of funding for the Regional Development Australia boards – a recognition of the current role they play in regional development across the State.

“However, I’ll be seeking a meeting with Deputy Prime Minister Truss to outline my concerns about other aspects of the Budget and its significant impact on our regions,” Mr Brock said.