

News Release **Minister Geoff Brock**

Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Local Government

Monday, 11 May 2015

Federal Budget must re-instate local government funding cuts

Regional Development Minister, Geoff Brock today called on the Federal Government to re-instate vital road funding and financial assistance grants to South Australian councils in tomorrow's Budget.

"This time last year, the Federal Budget axed funding equivalent to around \$96 million through to 2016-17 to councils across the State," Mr Brock said.

"This included cutting Supplementary Road funding of \$18 million a year and freezing CPI indexation for Financial Assistance Grants to councils for three years.

"These cuts have unfairly penalised councils in South Australia, particularly regional councils, and today I urge the Treasurer to re-instate that funding in tomorrow night's Budget.

"The cuts to local road funding, in particular, have put South Australia at a major disadvantage compared to the other States," Mr Brock said.

"Since last year's Budget, I've travelled across the regions extensively and councils around the State have uniformly expressed their deep concerns to me about their struggle to keep up essential road maintenance programs on our rural roads.

"Since last year's cuts were announced, I've taken their concerns directly to Deputy Prime Minister and Regional Development Minister, Warren Truss in Canberra.

"I've continued to make his office aware of the significant impact of the Federal Budget cuts on our councils at every available opportunity

"I've also strongly supported the Local Government Association over the past year in their efforts to have this funding restored to SA councils.

"Now is the time for the Federal Government to stand up for local government in South Australia and re-instate this funding to councils tomorrow night.

"Over the past year, I've used the \$39 million package I negotiated as part of my agreement with the Premier to support economic growth in our regions

"The response to this funding had been very positive and has helped to fund a wide range of projects aimed at keeping confidence flowing in our regions and increasing job opportunities," Mr Brock said.

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