



Media Release

STRICTLY EMBARGOED
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At last – charities are on the election agenda!

'It is great to see a potential incoming government announcing policies that will improve the capacity of charities to serve their communities,' according to David Crosbie CEO of the charity peak body the Community Council for Australia (CCA).

'We're used to politicians talking about what business needs, but charities are rarely given a second thought, despite all the reform needed to ensure we have a strong charities sector moving forward. Over 1.3 million people work in Australia's charities sector. Charities turn over more than \$140 billion, are the heartbeat of our communities, and just like business, they need increased certainty and support if they are to invest in their services and improve outcomes for the people they serve. CCA welcomes these announcements and looks forward to working with a dedicated Charities Minister should the ALP form government after the election.'

Mr. Crosbie was speaking in Melbourne at lunchtime following the release of a comprehensive set of charity policy announcements by Labor Shadow Ministers Dr Andrew Leigh (Shadow Minister for Charities and Not-for-profits) and Mark Dreyfus (Shadow Attorney General). Mr. Crosbie was joined by many key representatives of the charities sector including: **Save the Children; Our Community; Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education; Fundraising Institute of Australia; Australian Council for International Development; Australian Conservation Foundation; Community Colleges Australia; Adult Learning Australia; World Wildlife Fund; Hammondcare; Community Broadcasting Association of Australia; Volunteering Australia; Philanthropy Australia; Australian Major Performing Arts Group; Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth.**

The ALP policies include:

Establish a *Not-for-profit Sector Expert Reference Panel* - the panel will work with Treasury, charities and not-for-profits, business, philanthropy, volunteering and other key stakeholders to produce a future Sector Development Plan for the charities and not-for-profit sector.

Establish a *'Building Community - Building Capacity'* Working Group- this group will implement recommendations from the Not-for-profit Sector Expert Reference Panel and work with charities to ensure they can be focal points for community building and collective purpose.

Fix Fundraising - the Charity Minister will start the process of harmonising Australia's fundraising laws with States, Territories, Treasury and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

Freedom to Advocate - Labor will introduce a range of new measures including amendments to Charities Act 2013 to ensure advocacy is seen as a legitimate and appropriate charitable activity.

Reinstate the Annual Charities Report and increase the power of the ACNC Advisory Board

Charity Passport - Labor's Charities Minister will work with relevant Commonwealth departments and agencies to ensure the charity passport – one stop shop - scheme works.

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