



19 May 2011

Budget 2011-12 – Supporting the Riverton Electorate

Dr Mike Nahan, the Member for Riverton said the 2011-12 State Budget handed down today included significant funding to support the local area and help build the Riverton Electorate.

Dr Nahan said the State Government's \$850 million education capital works program in the 2011-12 Budget and specifically the additional \$52 million over four years to expand the Government's School Air Conditioning Policy to include schools that were previously outside the nominated air-cooling zones would be well-received by local families.

"The electorate has some of the best schools in the State and to be able to enhance the school's infrastructure with Government-funded air-conditioning is a huge win for local families and our local schools," said Dr Nahan.

"Air-conditioning of our schools has been one of my priorities so that teachers, staff and students are provided with a pleasant workplace to teach in that is conducive to aiding the student's learning. I am very pleased that the State Government has responded to this important initiative in such a positive way."

"Children spend a great deal of time at school and that is why it is so important to ensure that schools have the very best facilities available."

Dr Nahan said the State Budget included increased support for seniors on low or fixed incomes.

"I have been lobbying on behalf of local seniors for the Seniors Cost of Living Rebate to be increased and the State Government has responded with a significant capital injection of \$40 million worth of relief, including enhancing the rebate for singles up from \$104 last year to \$150 this year and for couples, it will be increased from \$157 to \$225," Dr Nahan said.

"The new higher rebates will be paid directly into the bank accounts of eligible WA Senior's card holders in July."

"We have also listened to the needs of seniors who work part time to contribute to their own retirement and who make a vital contribution to our State's economy by expanding the eligibility for the Seniors Card to encompass people who are aged 60 years old and who now work up to 25 hours a week compared to the previous limit of 20 hours."

Dr Nahan said other much-needed initiatives in the budget, included \$2 million towards the \$8.4 million construction of the Perth Market Authority's Weekend Market and \$5.649 million for the Market Authority's Central Trading Area Fire Services System.

"The Weekend Market is particularly popular and the continuing construction of their new facilities will be a boon for local traders and families alike," said Dr Nahan.

"Similarly, its Central Trading Area is a hive of activity with more than 3,000 people on site each morning so the funding for the Fire Services System is an important improvement to their infrastructure."

Dr Nahan said the budget also offered unprecedented support to vulnerable and disadvantaged West Australians through the \$1 billion Social Services Package.

"This historic package includes initiatives to improve the quality of life and well-being of those in our community most in need," said Dr Nahan.

"It includes \$604 million which will assist not-for-profit organisations to reach out to people who are living with or supporting someone who has a disability and those who are seeking crisis accommodation or support for mental health issues to deliver that care to those who need it most – people who are disadvantaged or vulnerable."

"So many local charities and not-for-profit welfare agencies will benefit from this funding, including organisations such as St Vincent de Paul, the Good Samaritans, Anglicare WA and Save the Children Australia, which are currently delivering these important services in the Riverton electorate and across WA."

"The ability of these organisations to continue and grow is now assured by this historic funding decision."

"Another vital issue in this electorate is access to good transport and the additional 45 train carriages, the additional 78 buses and \$133.6 million to provide more frequent, accessible bus services in the next four years will also benefit the local community."

"We have all been paying the price for the previous Labor Government's policy of freezing utility prices at an artificially low level."

"While electricity and water have had modest increases they are less than the increases in the underlying costs of producing those essential services. Even so, we are still subsidising households to the tune of \$1 billion to provide those services but without these small increases, the State subsidy would have been \$3 billion. Other State charges have remained low or there have been no increases."

Dr Nahan said that although there was no provision in the Budget regarding the proposed Roe Extension, plans were progressing following community and stakeholder consultation.

"Building the Roe Extension is definitely on the State Government's agenda. We have spent \$20 million so far on the important consultation phase, a preferred concept design has been developed and environmental approvals documentation is well advanced. It is expected that funding for the project will be announced in next year's budget," said Dr Nahan.

"I was also very pleased that the State Budget announced a \$442 million surplus for 2011-12. The Liberal-National Government has been able to deliver that surplus because of our disciplined financial management in delivering projects and better services throughout the State."

"This is a very positive budget for the local community and the State that will support jobs, assist those in need and build for the future."

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