



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Federation Chamber

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Corio Electorate: Economy

SPEECH

Monday, 30 November 2015

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Date Monday, 30 November 2015	Source House
Page 14175	Proof No
Questioner	Responder
Speaker Marles, Richard, MP	Question No.

Mr MARLES (Corio) (10:48): I read with interest that this weekend gone, the Victorian Liberal State Council met in my electorate in Geelong. But, whilst they may have been in Geelong, it is very clear that there is little understanding from that entity about what is being experienced through the impacts of government policy in suburbs like Norlane and Corio. Today in the suburbs of Norlane and Corio, unemployment stands at a staggering 21.7 per cent; 15 percentage points higher than the state average. Today, youth unemployment in my electorate is at 20.6 per cent; six points higher than the state average. And yet, the federal Liberal government still has no plans to fix unemployment in and around Geelong. Instead, we have a Prime Minister and a government who have cut funding to education and who have cut funding to our health system. Indeed, it is coming up to two years now—in February—since the decision was made by Alcoa to close its operations in Geelong, and we still do not have a single cent committed by this federal government to assisting Geelong through the transition that it is experiencing with its economy.

But now the Turnbull government wants to make life even harder for the people in my electorate of Corio who find themselves among these very difficult statistics. When the Prime Minister plans to raise, as he is suggesting, the GST to 15 per cent, when there seem to be plans out there to make bread, milk, medication, housing, school fees and fresh fruit more expensive, the Prime Minister is in effect planning to hurt the families of my electorate.

The Prime Minister has said, 'There will be no changes made under our government which will be unfair to people on a lower income', but NATSEM modelling shows an increase in the GST would see people least able to afford it pay the biggest share of their incomes in GST. It is a regressive tax which will hit households by up to \$4,000 a year. This hits people when they go to the grocer; this hits people when they are seeking medication. This hits them when they are trying to get their kids better and when they are trying to get their kids off to school.

Norlane and Corio are suburbs where health and diet are real issues. Health outcomes in those suburbs are worse, particularly in respect of non-communicable diseases—such as diabetes, which is much higher. Fruiterer Glyn Harvey has for many years done 'fresh fruit Friday' at North Shore Primary School, and to this day still provides assistance in getting fresh fruit into those schools. That is the right direction; slugging that commodity with an increased tax is absolutely the wrong direction.

While these basics are being hit, we now see the prospect from the Victorian Young Liberals supporting a motion to move a luxury car tax. While they want to take tax off a BMW, they want to put it on bread. This shows the Liberal Party is completely out of touch when it comes to my electorate. If they want to come again, they can give me a call and I will take them to Norlane and Corio.