

Residents facing high grocery bills



Chris on the campaign trail talking about the cost of living

Managing the weekly household budget has never been more difficult for families across our area.

With residents facing high grocery bills, childcare fees, petrol prices, and other increases in the cost of living. The financial pressure on households is reaching breaking point – people are struggling to balance their weekly budget while keeping the roof over their heads. When you throw in high average monthly repayments, rising rents, mortgage repossession and personal insolvency rates a disturbing picture emerges.

The price of fruit has jumped by over 8% while the price of vegetables has increased by 6% in the June quarter.

When you compare Australia's performance on grocery prices with other countries, a disturbing picture begins to emerge. If you take an average basket of groceries – the Consumer Food Price Index – you find that since 1996, grocery prices in Australia have risen by 43.6%.

This is way ahead of New Zealand (23.4%), the USA (25.1%) and the United Kingdom (11.6%).

Meanwhile inflation in Australia – the Consumer Price Index – has risen by only 28.8% since 1996.

In other words, the increase in grocery prices over the last decade has far outstripped inflation.

At the same time the Federal Government ignores the reality of Australia's housing affordability crisis, with young families being locked into rising rents and locked out of their first home.

To combat these issues Federal Labor has plans for a Petrol Commissioner, National Grocery Prices Inquiry, and a Housing Affordability Fund – looking to protect consumers and give young families the opportunity to buy their first home.

Kevin Rudd and Federal Labor have announced plans that would see the consumer price watchdog monitor grocery prices for the first time.

A Rudd Labor Government will:

- Strengthen the role of the ACCC to monitor supermarket prices to make sure that families are getting a fair deal;
- Direct the ACCC to conduct a National Grocery Pricing Inquiry to report to the Government within six months, taking submissions from individuals, consumer groups, retailers, businesses along the supply chain and other interested parties;
- Labor will also ensure that the ACCC will set up a dedicated website to publish this pricing snapshot. This act will serve to increase transparency in the market place and exert greater competitive pressure on the retail market.

New International Kempo academy to be built at Kemps Creek.

The new centre will be built on Bill Anderson Reserve at Kemps Creek and replace the old derelict tennis courts. The centre will occupy close to 1000 square metres and will be a purpose built venue for Martial Arts competitions making the only one of its kind in the country. It will also be used as a community centre where the local residents could use it for a variety of different purposes (parties etc). It will also be used by the local schools as part of their sport program and it will be used by the ASC for the Active After School Program. It will be the first major development in the Kemps Creek area in 30 years.



New international Kempo academy to be built at Kemps Creek

Chris in Canberra

These are the speeches that Chris has made since the last Horsley Cecil Park Report:

- INTERNATIONAL TRADE INTEGRITY BILL 2007: SECOND READING - 16-08-2007
- AUSTRALIAN TECHNICAL COLLEGES (FLEXIBILITY IN ACHIEVING AUSTRALIA'S SKILLS NEEDS) AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2) 2007: SECOND READING - 15-08-2007
- SPEECH: AUSTRALIAN TECHNICAL COLLEGES (FLEXIBILITY IN ACHIEVING AUSTRALIA'S SKILLS NEEDS) AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2) 2007: SECOND READING - 15-08-2007
- TAX LAWS AMENDMENT (2007 MEASURES NO. 4) BILL 2007: TAXATION (TRUSTEE BENEFICIARY NON-DISCLOSURE TAX) BILL (NO. 1) 2007: TAXATION (TRUSTEE BENEFICIARY NON-DISCLOSURE TAX) BILL (NO. 2) 2007: SECOND READING - 13-08-2007
- TAX LAWS AMENDMENT (2007 MEASURES NO. 4) BILL 2007: CONSIDERATION IN DETAIL - 3-08-2007
- TRADE PRACTICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 1) 2007: SECOND READING - 08-08-2007
- MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE: ECONOMY - 08-08-2007
- TRADE PRACTICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 1) 2007: CONSIDERATION IN DETAIL - 08-08-2007
- TRADE PRACTICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 1) 2007: CONSIDERATION IN DETAIL - 08-08-2007
- TRADE PRACTICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 1) 2007: CONSIDERATION IN DETAIL - 08-08-2007
- TRADE PRACTICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 1) 2007: CONSIDERATION IN DETAIL - 08-08-2007
- SPEECH: TRADE PRACTICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 1) 2007: CONSIDERATION IN DETAIL - 08-08-2007
- TRADE PRACTICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 1) 2007: CONSIDERATION IN DETAIL - 08-08-2007
- TRADE PRACTICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 1) 2007: CONSIDERATION IN DETAIL - 08-08-2007
- TRADE PRACTICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 1) 2007: CONSIDERATION IN DETAIL - 08-08-2007
- STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS: MR BILL GALTON - 08-08-2007
- CORPORATIONS AMENDMENT (INSOLVENCY) BILL 2007: SECOND READING - 08-08-2007
- SUPERANNUATION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (TRUSTEE BOARD AND OTHER MEASURES) (CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS) BILL 2007: SECOND READING - 08-08-2007
- STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS: BROADBAND - 21-06-2007
- INTERNATIONAL TAX AGREEMENTS AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 1) 2007: SECOND READING - 21-06-2007
- TAX LAWS AMENDMENT (SIMPLIFIED GST ACCOUNTING) BILL 2007: SECOND READING - 19-06-2007
- PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS: FUEL PRICES - 18-06-2007
- APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 1) 2007-2008: CONSIDERATION IN DETAIL - 18-06-2007
- APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 1) 2007-2008: CONSIDERATION IN DETAIL - 18-06-2007
- APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 1) 2007-2008: CONSIDERATION IN DETAIL - 18-06-2007
- APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 1) 2007-2008: CONSIDERATION IN DETAIL - 18-06-2007
- APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 1) 2007-2008: CONSIDERATION IN DETAIL - 18-06-2007
- CORPORATIONS LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (SIMPLER REGULATORY SYSTEM) BILL 2007: CORPORATIONS (FEES) AMENDMENT BILL 2007: CORPORATIONS (REVIEW FEES) AMENDMENT BILL 2007: SECOND READING - 14-06-2007
- APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 1) 2007-2008: CONSIDERATION IN DETAIL - 14-06-2007
- APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 1) 2007-2008: CONSIDERATION IN DETAIL - 14-06-2007
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- APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 1) 2007-2008: CONSIDERATION IN DETAIL - 14-06-2007
- FINANCIAL SECTOR LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (RESTRUCTURES) BILL 2007: SECOND READING - 13-06-2007
- ADJOURNMENT: DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT SERVICES - 13-06-2007
- MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE: CLIMATE CHANGE - 31-05-2007
- WORKPLACE RELATIONS AMENDMENT (A STRONGER SAFETY NET) BILL 2007: SECOND READING - 30-05-2007
- ADJOURNMENT: VOLUNTEER SMALL EQUIPMENT GRANTS PROGRAM - 29-05-2007
- TAX LAWS AMENDMENT (SMALL BUSINESS) BILL 2007: SECOND READING - 24-05-2007
- STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS: SECOND SYDNEY AIRPORT - 24-05-2007
- TAX LAWS AMENDMENT (PERSONAL INCOME TAX REDUCTION) BILL 2007: SECOND READING - 23-05-2007

If you would like copies of any of Chris' speeches in Parliament please phone 9726 4100 or go to www.chrisbowen.net

THE Horsley & Cecil Park Report

A COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER FROM CHRIS BOWEN – YOUR FEDERAL MEMBER FOR PROSPECT ■ SEPTEMBER 2007

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Come and meet our new GP



Federal Prospect MP Chris Bowen with Dr Beryl Pham during construction of the GP building earlier in the year.

This will be a fitting opportunity for the community to come together, recognise their achievement and welcome Dr Pham to Horsley Park.

Once Dr Pham has established her practice it is envisaged that a pharmacy will be located next to the general practice for the convenience of patients.

Make sure you put these details on your fridge or near your phones:

Dr Beryl Pham
1818 The Horsley Drive,
Horsley Park
Ph: (02) 9620 2880

If you are would like to attend the official opening and barbeque please contact my office to RSVP on 9726-4100 or you can email me at chris.bowen.mp@aph.gov.au

You might recall that earlier this year I reported that after a long and determined community campaign, Horsley Park was going to have its own General Practitioner.

Well soon the wait will be over with Dr Beryl Pham opening the doors to her general practice in September.

The official opening will be held at 12 midday on Tuesday, 25 September. I will also be putting on a sausage sizzle for the community.



Chris with people campaigning for the surgery.

Chris Bowen writes ...

In this edition of the Horsley Cecil Park report we congratulate the local residents who were

presented with Older Australian certificates.

There is also exciting local news about the Maltese Prime Minister visiting our electorate and finally Horsley Park will have a doctors surgery.

In other news Federal Labor has been putting together a solid set of policies for the up coming Federal election, on issues ranging from housing affordability to the environment.

As always, if there is any Federal Government matter you would like to discuss with me, please contact me on 9726 4100 or chris.bowen.mp@aph.gov.au.

Chris Bowen
 Federal Member for Prospect

Recognition for older Australians



Chris with award winner Bernadette Sammut

Chris recently hosted the Older Australians Morning Tea at Smithfield RSL to recognise the valuable contribution older Australians make to our community.

The Morning Tea is the community's chance to recognise everything our older citizens do for their families, their neighbourhoods, and for the community at large.

An important part of the morning was the awards presentation. Chris presented Certificates of Recognition for those older Australians living in the electorate of Prospect nominated by their peers and the local community.

Larry Stellar provided the very enjoyable entertainment

**Award recipients from
Horsley Park**
Joe Viglione
Bernadette Sammut
Maria Mansueto
Helen Kerfoot

Interest Rates Rises



Photo courtesy of the Fairfield Champion. Taken by Sasha Woolley.

For families with a mortgage on the median priced home of \$400,000, the decision will mean they will now be paying:

- \$578 dollars per month more in mortgage repayments compared to 2002 before the first of Mr Howard's nine rate rises.
- An extra \$66.70 dollars per month more in mortgage repayments since the last interest rate rise in August 07.

This will worsen housing affordability pressures faced by families – as revealed by recently released 2006 Census data showing more than one in three households with mortgages in mortgage stress.

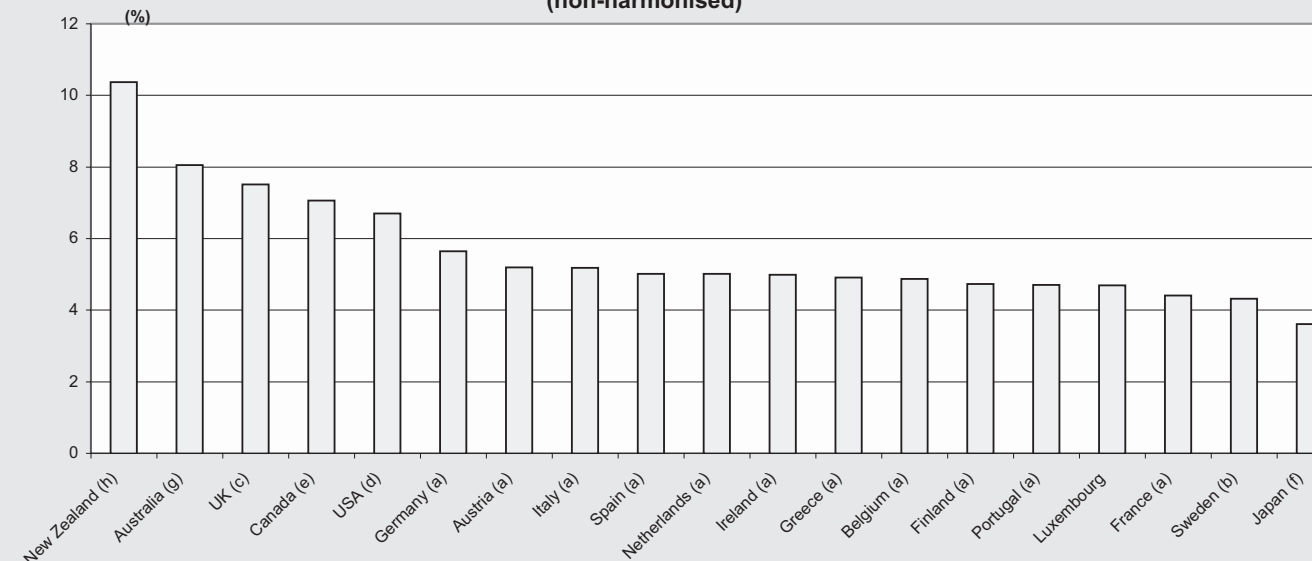
Rather than excuses and finger-pointing, Federal Labor has committed itself to economically responsible policies that are directed at keeping interest rates low.

- We are committed to keeping a tight rein on the economy and disciplined spending – we will run budget surpluses on average over the economic cycle;
- We are committed to the independence of the Reserve Bank and its inflation targeting regime;
- We will implement policies to fight inflation by tackling skill labour shortages and infrastructure bottlenecks that push up business costs.

Families and businesses have once again been hit with another interest rate rise – the ninth consecutive rate rise since the Reserve Bank (RBA) began increasing rates.

With the cost of living pressures already straining many household budgets, the decision by the Reserve Bank to lift rates will add to already high levels of mortgage stress.

Indicative housing loan interest rates
As at July 2007 (or nearest reported period)
(non-harmonised)



(a) New business, less than 1 yr maturity. (b) Housing Credit Institutions, average rate for housing loans. (c) Banks, weighted variable, average for month. (d) 30-year conventional mortgages. (e) conventional mortgage 1 yr rate. (f) Housing loan corporation (private dwellings). (g) Banks standard variable. (h) variable first mortgage.

Source: Eurostat. US Federal Reserve. Bank of Canada, Bank of Japan. Reserve Bank of New Zealand. Reserve Bank of Australia. Central Bank of Sweden. Bank of England

Fighting for Small Business

You might have read recently about the Federal Government introducing long awaited changes to the Trade Practices Act into the Parliament.

The Trade Practices Act is an important tool in promoting competition amongst business and protecting smaller businesses against larger companies who might abuse their market power.

As the Shadow Assistant Treasurer, Chris has set out a series of Labor amendments to strengthen the government's planned changes.

Labor has moved amendments to the government's legislation dealing with:

- strengthening section 46 by dealing with recoupment and the definition of "take advantage";
- enabling the Federal Magistrates Court to hear section 46 and 83 cases so that small business has a low cost jurisdiction in which to raise its concerns;
- the abolition of the dollar threshold for cases under section 51AC of the Trade Practices Act - Labor believes that unconscionable

conduct is unconscionable conduct, regardless of the value of a contract;

- the need to give the ACCC power to deal with "creeping acquisitions" - at present the ACCC does not have the power to take account of other recent acquisitions in assessing whether a purchase of a small competitor by a bigger competitor is anti-competitive;
- jail terms and penalties for company executives involved with serious cartel operations;
- strengthening the powers of the ACCC to gather necessary evidence to investigate anti-competitive behaviour;
- ensuring the second Deputy Chair of the ACCC has a small business background.

A lot of Labor's amendments have been pushed by some of the bodies representing small business.

Disappointingly, these Labor amendments were rejected by the Coalition in the House of Representatives during the last parliamentary sitting.

Do you observe any abuses of market power in your industry?

Please email Chris at Chris.Bowen.MP@aph.gov.au, I also encourage you to sign up to the Small Business E-Network by emailing me as well.



Maltese PM visits our area



The Maltese Prime Minister and Chris Bowen.

Residents in Western Sydney were recently treated to a visit by The Maltese Prime Minister Dr Lawrence Gonzi.

Dr Gonzi came to Greystanes to launch a Maltese Community Directory and make a presentation to a resident of Prospect Laurie Dimech.

Dr Gonzi's visit was part of a wider trip to visit Maltese Australians to encourage them to take up Maltese citizenship and learn the Maltese language.

Chris welcomed Dr Gonzi as the local member and as vice chairman of the Parliamentary friends of Malta.

Smarter Banking for Small Business

A New Website for the Small business Sector

I would like to highlight a new website where small business people can access information which may assist them in running and growing their operations.

The 'Smarter Banking for Small business' website is an initiative of the Australian Bankers Association (ABA) Small business Forum which is made up of small business people and representatives from Government organisations.

The website provides a central point for small business where they can access business banking and financial literacy materials on a range of topics.

The site can be found here:
www.smallbusinessbanking.com.au