



TOM VENNING MP

Member for Grey



MEDIA RELEASE

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CHILDCARE HOPES DASHED: PROGRAM LEAVES COMMUNITIES STRANDED

Member for Grey Tom Venning has declared the Federal Government's Building Early Education Fund (BEEF) - Small Scale Capital Grant Program unfit to solve the childcare desert in Grey. Citing issues faced by the Crystal Brook Community Childcare Working Group, the Member for Grey whose electorate covers over 92% of the State, asserts that the Program neglects the specific circumstances that regional, rural, and remote towns face.

The Crystal Brook Community Childcare Working Group who has been in contact with Mr Venning's office obtained conditional approval to access a site at the Crystal Brook Primary School to build a facility, commissioned plans, and met with eager operators, only to be locked out by inflexible guidelines that:

- **Demand applicants already operate an existing centre.**
- **Prohibits community consortiums from applying.**
- **Restricts eligibility to only accepting providers with between 1 and 9 facilities.**

Furthermore, Mr Venning highlights that the program's incredibly tight two-month application window imposes an onerous and unrealistic burden on regional towns that lack the upfront capital to hire consultants for shovel-ready business plans.

Quotes attributable to Tom Venning MP Member for Grey

"The BEEF grant program is unfit for purpose and does nothing to fix the childcare desert faced in regional, rural, and remote communities in South Australia."

"The restrictive conditions of this BEEF grant program favours existing metropolitan providers."

"The government made significant noise about this program and how it would deliver universal childcare. But it fails badly in regional SA where childcare access is the worst in all of Australia."

"Towns like Crystal Brook have land earmarked and operators ready to go, but they are being locked out by ludicrous rules that ban consortiums and penalise larger, experienced early education providers, and simultaneously also make it impossible for new operators to enter."

"It is absurd that a community group cannot own the asset and lease it to a provider, forcing grassroots volunteers to navigate a bureaucratic nightmare just to secure basic services."

"Expecting small regional communities, and volunteers to fund and deliver shovel-ready capital plans within a two-month window is an onerous and unrealistic burden."

END

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