



TOM VENNING MP

Member for Grey



MEDIA RELEASE

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VENNING'S REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON LABOR'S 2026 BUDGET

Member for Grey Tom Venning MP has criticised Labor's 2026 Budget of broken promises and cuts for regional South Australians. Mr Venning said across the budget, regional Australians face at least \$11 billion worth of cuts to sectors such as infrastructure, trade, drought funding, and communications. Looking at infrastructure specifically, Venning has pointed to the fact that less than 2% of new infrastructure projects in Labor's budget are for the regions as a clear illustration that Labor has forgotten about the country yet again.

In contrast, Mr Venning has said Angus Taylor's Budget in Reply is a much more rounded and common sense approach to the issues that matter to regional South Australians. He has pointed to the Coalition's seven sensible policies as the most effective way to restore regional South Australia's standard of living.

Quotes attributable to Tom Venning Member for Grey

"It is very disappointing to see Labor axe critical communications funding for regional Australia. They have cut the Better Connectivity Plan (BCP) by 'reprioritising' the funding, which comprises \$116 million in 2026-27 and a further \$49.6 million in the forward estimates.

"The BCP included future rounds of the Mobile Black Spot Program, the Regional Connectivity Program, the On Farm Connectivity Program, disaster and telecommunications resilience measures, the Regional Tech Hub, and the National Audit of Mobile Coverage. Regional Australians are crying out for better connectivity, and Labor are not listening."

"At a time when we need to support our regions struggling with the impacts of the fuel crisis, Labor has made massive cuts to regional funding including \$191.6 million from pest and disease, regional trade, and drought funding."

"There's a \$52 million cut to the Future Drought Fund alone, just as farmers battle difficult seasonal conditions in large parts of SA."

"Our fuel security plan will support regional South Australia by delivering more fuel, more storage, and more security to take pressure off our farmers, fishers, and small businesses to keep Australia moving."



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“We will back our small regional businesses like farmers and tradies to invest in vital assets through a permanent \$50,000 instant asset write off for anyone who has a turnover of less than \$10 million.”

“Meanwhile, Labor has allocated zero additional support for regional tourism operators, who are vital small business owners to small country towns that have been severely impacted by the fuel crisis.”

“Despite receiving a comprehensive, sensible report from Australian Grape and Wine, Labor have dedicated no funding to our wine industry. Instead, they have decided to phase out the \$10 million Wine Tourism and Cellar Door grant package. This will only increase the pressure our regional wine growers are already facing.”

“Less than 2% of the new infrastructure projects in Labor’s budget are for the regions, yet Australians will pay \$40 million in tax for Labor’s Australian European Union Free Trade Agreement, including \$38.6 million over four years, then \$7.1 million per year to implement this agreement that sells out our farmers.”

“This budget contains no new funding package to ensure the long-term viability of the Nyrstar smelter in Port Pirie. While an earlier transitional funding package of \$57.5 million is included in the budget papers, that package expired on 1 May 2026 and negotiations for further support are still unresolved. This leaves the future of Nyrstar workers in Port Pirie and their families hanging in the balance.”

“One of our policies is to establish a Future Generations Fund to ensure resource windfalls are used responsibly to ensure the future of our children and grandchildren. It is about making sure today’s good fortune builds tomorrow’s strength, and 25% of infrastructure flows from this Fund will support the regions that fuel, feed, and power our nation.”

“I am pleased to see that, as a result of my advocacy, Labor decided to extend and increase the supplementary road funding for South Australian councils in line with indexation despite it not being included in the forward estimates.”

“Even with supplementary funding, South Australia remains the lowest-funded state in the nation on a per-kilometre basis, but this is a step in the right direction.”

“This budget is a clear illustration that Labor has once again forgotten regional South Australia.”

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