

# *Media Release*

## **Country Mayors Association Inc of NEW SOUTH WALES**



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### **REGIONAL TRANSPORT AND ROADS COULD DECIDE STATE ELECTION**

Country Mayors Association of NSW is becoming extremely frustrated by the funding focus on Western Sydney in the lead up to the State Election. Yesterdays announcement from the NSW Labor leader Chris Minns MP, that should Labor form government post the 25 March election the coalitions committed funding for the upgrades to the Great Western Highway duplication and tunnel will be scrapped in favor of infrastructure funding for Western Sydney.

Chairman of CMA Jamie Chaffey said, "there is more to NSW than Western Sydney; CMA members have endorsed our State election priorities that are focused on eight key areas. Regional Road funding is high on that list.

"The City and Regions are reliant on each other, the food and fiber along with the minerals and energy produced in Regional NSW is critical to the prosperity of the State and without safe and productive highway networks that connect City to the Regions we fail. Chairman Chaffey said."

Executive Member of CMA, Forbes Shire Mayor Phyllis Miller said "For twenty years the Central West has fought to open our food bowl to the rest of NSW, now we have been dealt a blow like no other. The much needed upgraded Great Western Highway road duplication and tunnel infrastructure would help our residents by saving commute time for their advanced health and education needs, and now if Labor comes to power it will be taken away from the Central West community. Mayor Miller said."

Mayor of Cabonne Shire Council, Kevin Beatty said "this is extremely disappointing; we have been campaigning for a safe and productive link between Sydney and the Central West of NSW for more than twenty years. The last twelve months we have seen many extreme natural disasters, the Central West was virtually cut off from the City by Road and Rail for an extended period. Our tourist, business and residents were all dramatically effected and this caused an enormous economic down turn to our economies Mayor Beatty said."

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of February the NSW Coalition government committed \$1billion dollars for Regional transport and roads if re-elected; \$400 million to extend the critical “Fixing local Roads” program, \$300 million to create a “Build Back Better” fund and \$300 million to “Fast Track Freight” - \$200 million of that amount will be allocated to rail projects.

It is expected that NSW Labor will later today announce their Regional Roads funding commitment, if elected Labor are expected to commit in the vicinity of \$670 million in Regional transport and road funding.

“The CMA stands firm in our pursuit of equity of service provision for the residents of our communities. We stand united with our members to advocate for residents who choose to call country NSW home. We will continue to work with both State and Commonwealth governments to achieve the best quality of life and provision of services for our residents, and we look forward to a prosperous future, Chairman Chaffey said.”

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