



Image: Celebrating Clarinda Primary School's 125th birthday!

Clare O'Neil MP

Summer Reflection

Happy New Year! I hope you had a great time with your loved ones. And if you were working, thank you. Especially our essential workers who are often pulled away from family time through this period.

Like other busy households, the summer's been a juggle with work, kids and school holidays, but I do really love it. It's been fun exploring our local area. There's so much to do. We always enjoy stretching our legs (and my whippets') at Namatjira Park, which will soon see a \$9 million federal boost through the Thriving Suburbs Fund. Have you checked out the newly redeveloped Carnegie Memorial Swimming Pool yet? It was backed by a \$15 million federal investment.

Thanks to everyone who responded to our survey - we were overwhelmed with the number of responses. It was helpful to hear your thoughts, and I'll share key insights soon. While feedback covered many topics, cost-of-living was consistent.

It's a pressure felt across our community, and I've been fighting hard in Canberra to address it in various ways. We have a range of measures to address cost-of-living, so make sure you read the checklist inside to ensure you're accessing all that's available to you.

I've been reflecting on the Albanese Labor Government's first term and what we've delivered. This newsletter captures some of the ways throughout.

It's been an honour to represent Hotham for over a decade and, in the past three years in government, we've been building a fairer Australia. We've lifted wages, strengthened Medicare, reduced inflation and eased cost-of-living. There's more to do and we must maintain momentum to keep making a real difference.

Enjoy the newsletter! It covers some incredible Hotham wins and stories: local leaders, fighters and legends doing great things.

As always, stay in touch.



Clare & her daughter - Baby G - at Namatjira Park in Clayton South (undergoing \$9 million+ federal upgrade soon)

— Clare

Federal Member for Hotham



Pauline & MSCAN

Hotham hero

Meet Pauline, an inspiring local who came to Canberra with the Melanoma and Skin Cancer Advocacy Network - or MSCAN.

While juggling a newborn and toddler, she faced Stage 3 Melanoma diagnosis and treatment. Now doing well, Pauline advocates for patient voices in health and cancer care, from prevention to treatment and clinical trial design. What a fighter!

I promised Pauline and MSCAN to remind everyone: reduce your risk of skin cancer by protecting your skin from the sun and other sources of UV rays. Put on sunscreen, find shade and wear a wide-brimmed hat!



Delivering for women

- **Cheaper childcare and \$1 billion** to build new centres.
- **Expanded paid parental leave** (26 weeks up from 18 weeks).
- **Superannuation on Paid Parental Leave.**
- **Closing the gender pay gap** to the lowest on record and increased women's weekly earnings by \$173.80 a week.
- Opened **22 endometriosis clinics.**
- **10 days paid domestic and family violence leave.**
- **Record investment to end violence against women.**
- More housing for **women escaping violence.**
- **Expanding support for single parents.**
- Dedicated funding for **miscarriage support.**
- On track to **eliminate cervical cancer by 2035.**
- **Addressed period poverty** in remote First Nations communities (free pads and tampons).
- **Respectful relationships education** mandatory in schools.
- **\$200 million investment in women's sport.**

Remembrance Day

On Remembrance Day, we honour all who have served in wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations, and remember the 103,000 who made the ultimate sacrifice. This year, we also marked the 80th anniversary of D-Day and 25 years of Australian service in Timor-Leste.

I was honoured to join the Oakleigh Carnegie RSL for their service.



With Oakleigh Police Station's Senior Sergeant Mark Rogers at the Oakleigh Carnegie RSL service.



Clayton RSL Secretary John Saunders with Taylah Tillotson, a nurse and lieutenant in the Australian Army Cadets.

Hotham highlights



RMHC VIC & TAS

A huge thanks to CEO Peter Bishop and Family Support Coordinator Michelle Trewin from Ronald McDonald House Charities VIC & TAS for the insightful tour of Ronald McDonald House Monash in Clayton. The team provides a home-away-from-home for regional families accessing Monash Children's Hospital.



Local winners: Australian Exporter of the Year Awards

I caught up with Fantine Wu from Life-Space Group, a Clayton-based leader in microbiome health and the e-Commerce winner at the Australian Exporter of the Year Awards. One in four Australian jobs rely on trade, so businesses like Life-Space Group are vital to our community and country.

- **Helped 200,000 Australians through the Home Guarantee Scheme** – twice what the last Government did.
- Passed Labor's Help to Buy law in the Parliament, **getting 40,000 more low and middle-income Australians into home ownership** with a smaller mortgage and smaller deposit.
- Made **back-to-back increases to Commonwealth Rent Assistance**.
- **Improving renters' rights** through National Cabinet.

Delivering on housing

- Passed Labor's Build to Rent legislation in Parliament, **getting an extra 80,000 rental properties into the pipeline**.
- Through the first round of the Housing Australia Future Fund, we're delivering **more than 13,000 new social and affordable homes around the country**.

Delivering on health and aged care

- **Strengthened Medicare** for every Australian.
- **Tripled the bulk billing incentive**, with more than 5.8 million additional free visits to the GP.
- **Making medicines cheaper** by freezing the cost of PBS medicines.
- Introduced **60 day prescriptions**.
- **Recruited 17,000+ new doctors**, with almost 25% increase in GP training numbers.
- **87 Medicare Urgent Care Clinics** opened.
- 22 clinics for **endometriosis and pelvic pain**.
- **Improved access to medicines**, focusing on breast cancer, heart disease and more.
- **Biggest rights-based reforms in a generation** in aged care.
- **\$4.3 billion investment** in home support services.
- Strengthened powers to **investigate and penalise poor care**.
- **15% pay rise** for aged care workers.
- **Registered nurse onsite in aged care 99%** of the time on average.

Delivering on education

- Additional **\$2.5 billion federal investment in Victorian public schools** (the biggest ever).
- Permanent introduction of **free TAFE to boost the workforce**.
- A re-elected Labor Government will **cut student debt by 20% (average \$5,520 off HECS debt)**.
- Ensuring student **debt doesn't grow faster than wages**.
- **New support for students on placement with Commonwealth Prac Payment**.
- **15% pay rise for early childhood educators**.
- Building **160 new childcare centres**.

Hotham leaders



Community Spirit and Leadership recipient Lily Zhang from Murrumbidgee Primary School - we met again at the school's grade six graduation.



Ruby Arnott
from Christ our Holy Redeemer



Hotham's Community Spirit and Leadership awards

At the end of last year, I had the chance to meet some remarkable students at my annual Community Spirit and Leadership awards. Each school - primary and secondary - choose a leader to recognise, and all their stories were inspiring.

From shaving hair for cancer, planting micro forests and helping at farmers markets, to becoming a horticultural expert and performing despite illness, these students share common values: kindness, courage and a drive to make a difference. This is just a snapshot of some of these young leaders.

A very big thanks to East Bentleigh Primary School for hosting and to Principal Sarah Spence, Assistant Principal Janette Grunfelder, the musicians, and Grade 6 helpers for their support.



Cost-of-living checklist

The Albanese Labor Government has rolled out a range of support across key areas like housing, jobs, health and education – many aimed at easing the cost-of-living. Check out this list to make sure you're fully aware of the measures we've delivered and to see if you're accessing everything available to you.

- ✓ **Tax cuts:** Tax cuts for all taxpayers.
- ✓ **Energy Bill Relief:** \$300 energy rebate for households and \$325 for eligible small businesses.
- ✓ **Cheaper medicines:** Freezing the cost of PBS medicines and delivering 60-day dispensing
- ✓ **Cheaper childcare:** Increased then Child Care Subsidy, plus \$1 billion to build new centres.
- ✓ **Inflation:** Brought inflation down (halved under Labor).
- ✓ **Wages:** Real wages growing again and minimum wage raised substantially.
- ✓ **Job creation:** Over a million new jobs (mostly full-time).
- ✓ **Supermarkets:** Cracking down on supermarkets to reduce costs at the checkout.
- ✓ **Surcharges:** Cracking down on unfair debit card surcharges.
- ✓ **Surplus:** First back-to-back surpluses in almost two decades.
- ✓ **Debt reduction:** Reduced debt by \$177 billion, saving \$70 billion in interest.
- ✓ **Pay rises for low-paid workers:** An increase to modern award minimum wages directly helping 2.6 million workers.



Celebrating Glendi

Thank you to the Oakleigh and wider Greek community for making Glendi such a long-standing, successful festival. It's a true celebration showcasing what makes our part of the world in Hotham special.



Then and now

At Clarinda Primary School's 125th birthday, I caught up with Zachary (then about to graduate grade six) and his mum Lisa. I first met them around 10 years ago when Zachary was at Clayton South Kindergarten and I was the new Member for Hotham. It's a reminder of how time flies, and how special it is to see kids and families (including my own) grow alongside my time representing Hotham.

Good luck to Zachary and all the students across Hotham starting new chapters in their schooling!

Clare O'Neil MP

Federal Member for Hotham

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Changes to Hotham's boundaries

The federal electorate redistribution has now been finalised by the Australian Electoral Commission. This means that after the next election it will be goodbye to some current parts of Hotham but hello to new ones too. You can learn more about the boundary changes by visiting the AEC website.

It is always important to keep the AEC up to date on your information and preferences too. For instance, if you want to receive a postal vote application for the next election. My office can help you with that.

