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Tom McIntosh MP
STATE MEMBER FOR
EASTERN VICTORIA REGION
Unit 1, 23 James Street, Pakenham VIC 3810
☎ (03) 5940 5010 TomMcIntoshMP

G'day Eastern Vic

Thanks for reading my monthly update. It's been a busy time on the road and in Spring Street with 3 sitting weeks this month.

I want to start this month by talking about housing. Housing is a fundamental human right and right now housing affordability is a huge issue in Victoria, Australia, and much of the world.

Last week I hosted a town hall in Mornington with National CFMEU Secretary Zach Smith to discuss the union's proposal for a tax on mega profits of Australia's biggest companies to help pay for the housing we need.

It was a great night and brought together people passionate about looking out for each other and a fair go.

The main take away is that we need to address housing affordability head on by building more houses in the right places for people to live, work, play, and spend time with family and loved ones.

In Australia there is a degree of inequality in our community and when housing is unaffordable, it affects the poor and vulnerable the most, including people experiencing family violence.

It's not just housing costs that are going up either, at the town hall it was great to hear directly from local construction workers about how much this is affecting them, their work mates, and families.

Everyone in our community deserves a roof over their head and a place to call home. I'm proud that Labor is building more houses at the state and federal level, and of the recent Victorian Government Housing Statement which outlines how we can build more homes and improve conditions for renters.

To do more we need big ideas and I thank Zach for flying from the ACT to speak directly to the community in Mornington about this big idea for funding the housing we need.

16 Days of Activism

RESPECT VICTORIA
ENT VIOLENCE
RESPECT VICTORIA

On average, one woman is killed by a man they know every 10 days.

To change this I'm supporting the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence 2023 campaign to eliminate violence against women and girls.

16 Days of Activism runs until 10 December and there are events across Eastern Victoria, to get involved check out:

https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/campaigns/16-days-activism-against-gender-based-violence

Mulgrave By-Election

What a great result with Eden Foster being elected to represent Mulgrave, replacing former Premier Dan Andrews. Eden is a champion of her local community and I'm looking forward to working with her.

Eden's election makes the Victorian Legislative Assembly 50% female for the first time in history which is an historic benchmark for gender equality in our state and I spoke about this in parliament this week. The Labor party are contributing to this rising equality in representation the most because we live our values and see equality through into outcomes.

Australia Wins Cricket World Cup

Inspired leadership from Cummins, sensational bowling backed up by incredible determination in the field, one of the best 50/50 one day Final knocks in history from Travis Head, and the winning runs from Eastern Vic's own Glenn Maxwell.

More than anything, this team has reminded us of the magic of ODI cricket. It's fallen away in recent years but after this performance, it absolutely needs to make a comeback, especially here in Australia's sporting capital.

Congrats to the whole team and I'm pushing for post victory celebrations!

Spirit of Anzac Prize

Congrats to Cassidy, our Premier’s Spirit of Anzac Prize winner.

Cassidy goes to Catholic College Sale and is one of twelve students across the State to be awarded the 2023 Premier’s Spirit of Anzac Prize, for her outstanding community focus and commitment to honouring the Anzac values of courage, endurance, and mateship.

It's so good to see the next generation acknowledge the service and sacrifice of our veterans.

Mornington Peninsula

Rosebud Secondary College

The wellness pavilion and new school buildings at Rosebud Secondary College are officially open, thanks to over $10 million in funding from the Victorian Government.

Thanks to principal Lisa Holt for giving me a tour of the new facilities.

Eco Park Opening

The new skate park as part of the Active Hub at Eco Park Mount Martha is finished and is looking great! Well done to everyone involved in getting this project over the line.

Southern Peninsula Rescue Squad

Southern Peninsula Rescue Squad Volunteers Denis and Murray took me out on their Rescue Vessel SP01, from Blairgowrie all the way down the coast out to the Heads.

This not-for-profit independent marine search and rescue service which was formed in 1967 to assist in rescuing people from the water, searching for missing people and boats, salvage operations and towing boats that are unable to safely make their way back to shore.

Keep up the great work, hope the summer ahead isn't a busy one.

Kindred Clubhouse

Kindness is at the centre of Kindred Clubhouse's free mental health support.
Just drop in, be welcomed by friends new and old, and together stay well in a shared sense of purpose.

Member for Hastings Paul Mercurio and I joined in the AGM including a big lunch spread made by members on site!

PACE Meeting

The Peninsula Advisory Committee for Elders, or PACE, are strong advocates against elder abuse, and I had a very informative meeting with them to discuss how we can strengthen the existing protections in place to ensure that no one is subject to this horrible crime.

Sorrento Bowls Club

Alan and his team have done a great job of building the membership base at Sorrento Bowls Club. It was great to get down to one of their celebratory BBQs after a big day of bowls games.

Sorrento Surf Lifesaving Club

Marc showed me around and told me about the upcoming major works including a $3.5 million commitment from the state government.

Thanks to all the volunteers who keep us safe in the water and please remember to swim between the flags this summer!

Gippsland

Gippsland Regional Package Forum

The $2 Billion Regional Package Forum in Traralgon drew a full room.

Ministers Gayle Tierney & Harriet Shing gave an overview and Q&A on the investment in regional worker accommodation, community infrastructure, tourism & the tiny towns program and how it will help grow our regions and provide 1,300 new social and affordable homes.

Mallacoota Visit

I spent a busy day in Mallacoota with Emergency Services Minister Jaclyn Symes.

We met with community, CFA and FFMV representatives to discuss fire preparedness ahead of the upcoming summer period.

Mallacoota and District Recovery Association (MADRA) shared their recovery experience and their priorities for the town.

We checked out the new skate park, dropped by the Wilderness Collective co-working space and I even had a go at the new container deposit facility which I'm told filled a small shipping container in its first week!

Mallacoota Abalone after an amazing rebuild with support from the Victorian Government is again the biggest employer in town and ships high quality product all around the world.

I also got a sneak peek at the Mallacoota Endemic Gardens, which recently opened, and they're looking incredible. The project was led by Bryce Watts-Parker after the 2019/20 Black Summer Bushfires.

Korumburra Hub Opening

The Korumburra Community Hub is officially open, and the building and the view is incredible, including a new library, the Milpara Community House, Korumburra Historical Society, a multi-purpose office, classroom space and kitchen facilities.

This is a place that will bring the community together for generations to come!

Korumburra Bowls Club

From up at the Basketball club I heard music, looked down & saw dancing, bowls and a lot of commotion so thought I'd drop in unannounced.

3 hours, 14 ends and many party pies and sausage rolls later I left the Wednesday night social bowls well informed on the Korumburra bowls club, thanks all!

Loch Primary School

Checked out the new inclusive playground with new play equipment and soft fall protection, made possible by $200,000 funding from the state government.

In Parliament

Financial Counsellors Victoria

Financial Counselling Victoria reps Zyl and Clair were in Parliament this week to discuss how we can better support people struggling with their finances.

Financial Counsellors do an incredible job supporting Victorians and reminding companies of their obligations to support people in hardship.

Money problems can happen to anyone. If you are you struggling to pay your bills, experiencing family violence, gambling harm or relationship breakdown, a financial counsellor can help.

Financial counsellors provide free, independent, and non-judgemental support and advocacy for people in financial difficulty.

Go to the Financial Counselling Victoria - FCVic website for more information and to find local support:

https://fcvic.org.au/get-help/

Community Health First

COMMUNITY HEALTH
RIGHT CARE, RIGHT PLACE,
RIGHT TIME

Community Health first are made up of the state's community health providers and they were in Parliament this week advocating for the funding they need to deliver preventative healthcare to all Victorians, keeping more people out of hospital, as well as the rest of the great work they do supporting the community.

Victorian Seafood Parliament Event

VICTORIAN SEAFOOD
TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Victorian Seafood was celebrated in Parliament and from Rye to Mallacoota, Eastern

Victoria has the best of the best.

Just last month, I saw the amazing work of Mallacoota Abalone.

Support local this Christmas and buy Victorian seafood!

Constituency Questions (60 seconds)

- Minister for Climate Action: what is the Victorian government doing to ensure that we reach our battery storage targets, so that we can put downward pressure on electricity prices and reduce emissions?
- Treasurer: what steps is the government taking to reduce economic inequality in Victoria and what is the government doing to put downward pressure on cost of living?
- Minister for Planning: Minister, how will the Victorian government's housing statement support affordable housing in this unique and special part of Victoria?
- Minister for Emergency Services: Minister, how is the Victorian government ensuring that East Gippsland communities are best prepared for the upcoming fire season?
- Minister for Veterans: Could the minister please outline to my constituents who can apply and what are eligible projects for the upcoming opening of the veteran's capital works and restoring war memorials grants program?

Members Statements (90 seconds)

- Kindred Clubhouse Mental Health Support , Southern Peninsula Marine Rescue volunteers & Eco Park Active Hub Mount Martha playground and skatepark opening
- Mallacoota bushfire preparedness and recovery trip
- Big Bonang Arvo and Remote Health in the Errinundra to Snowy Region
- Southern Peninsula Community Support

Legislative Council Committee Work

I sit on the Legislative Council Economics and Infrastructure Committee. The committee is busy and takes a deep dive into policy issues in Victoria. This takes a significant amount of my time but is extremely valuable and I am learning a huge amount from speaking to experts and community from across the state. The inquiry process also contributes to better policy.

This part of my job includes the recent release of the Inquiry into Victoria's Hemp Industry, the recent release of the Inquiry into Land Transfer Fees (stamp duty), and new inquiries about to start into pig welfare and Workcover. I'm also a member of the select committee on the 2026 Commonwealth Games.

Stay in touch

As always, if you need help with a constituent matter, please reach out to my office and we'll do everything we can to help you out.

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