



Dear Residents of the Berowra Electorate,

Over the last few weeks, many parts of "normal" life have resumed. Schools are back. Cafes and restaurants are allowing people to dine in. And many of us have finally reunited with family or friends we haven't seen in a while.

As we adjust, we must remain vigilant about social distancing, hand hygiene and cleaning surfaces. We have all worked hard on Australia's health response. The focus has now turned to the economic recovery, getting businesses open and people back to work.

Less than 100 days ago our nation was on the edge of an economic cliff.

The number of coronavirus cases was increasing by 20 per cent per day. Treasury were contemplating a collapse in GDP of more than 20 per cent in the June Quarter.

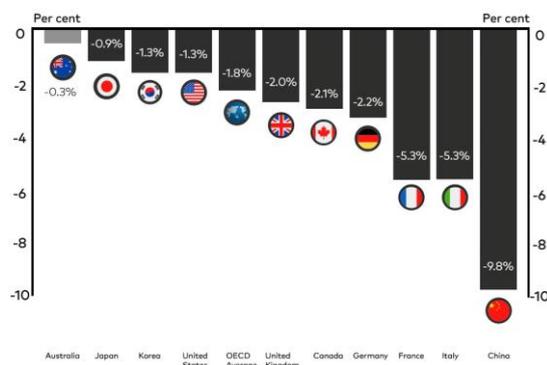
As the Treasurer, Josh Frydenberg, said last week, it was an economist's version of Armageddon.

However the National Accounts this week demonstrated that the cost of setting up Australia's health response is not anywhere near what we anticipated it would be.

It is remarkable that the Australian economy has only contracted by 0.3 per cent.

International real GDP growth comparisons

(March Quarter)



Our economy is faring better than most other developed countries.

This has been possible because together we have worked hard to contain the spread of COVID-19 and Australia's economic strength entering the crisis has enabled the unprecedented support for workers, households and businesses from the Federal

Government.

With restrictions easing, we are seeing some encouraging signs across the economy.

As the Reserve Bank Governor said last week in evidence to the Senate Committee on COVID-19 “with the national health outcomes better than earlier feared, it’s entirely possible that the economic downturn will not be as severe as earlier thought.”

The economic strength with which we entered the crisis gave us the fiscal firepower to respond as we have done with around \$260 billion in economic support, or the equivalent of 13.3 per cent of GDP.

We are not through this crisis. There will be difficult days ahead. But our nation, working together across geographical and political lines, has made great progress.

Parliament resumes today and as always I will be putting the concerns of our community on the public record.

You are welcome to share this email with family and friends who may be interested. Anyone who would like to be added to the distribution list can email julian.leeser.mp@aph.gov.au and ask to be added. You can also follow [JulianLeeserMP](#) on Facebook.

My team and I remain available to assist you however we can. The office will be open for walk-ins from 22nd June, however where possible please contact the office by phone or email, and remain vigilant about hand washing and social distancing.

Take care,

Julian Leeser

Holding Telstra to Account

Almost a month ago I launched a campaign to hold Telstra to account for its poor service in our electorate.

Since then, over 350 of you have written to me to tell me your Telstra story. More than 80% of suburbs across the electorate have been represented in the stories and issues you have raised with me, demonstrating how widespread the issues are.

Thank you for sharing with me. I've shared your stories with Telstra.



I gave Alan Jones an update on his final day at 2GB, which you can listen to 28 minutes into the podcast at the link below.

I am pleased to say that since then, Telstra seem to be taking the concerns we are raising seriously. I have had two meetings with Telstra CEO Andy Penn who has agreed to visit our electorate once restrictions permit.

I will keep you updated as we progress.

It's not too late to share your Telstra story with me so if you haven't already, you can do so here:

[Click here to share your Telstra story with me](#)

[**Interview with Alan Jones on 2GB**](#)

Foreign Investment Changes

Over the weekend, the Government announced significant reforms to Australia's foreign investment framework.

Foreign investment is critical to Australia's economic success and has benefited every sector of the economy. However, the balance must always be struck between welcoming and attracting foreign investments and ensuring that the only investment that proceeds is that which is in Australia's national interest.

With the geopolitical landscape becoming more complex and with technology developing rapidly, our framework for foreign investment needs to adapt to ensure that the Government can continue to protect Australia's interests.

The Government, with the support of the chairman of the Foreign Investment Review Board (FIRB), David Irvine, is seeking to strengthen our foreign investment framework in some important ways:

1. Introducing a national security test for foreign investment. This will require foreign investors (private and government investors) to inform the FIRB if they are preparing to acquire a direct interest in a sensitive national security business. It will also give the Treasurer power to "call in" proposed investments for review and require divestment in very exceptional circumstances.
2. Improving compliance by strengthening penalties and enforcement powers.
3. Streamlining approval processes for privately controlled institutional investment funds that hold purely passive foreign government funds, alongside their private capital. The idea is to make approvals easier where the investments are in sectors that are not sensitive and where foreign government investors are purely passive, while we tighten up the scrutiny on the investments that could pose a greater risk to our national security.

The details of this new framework will be worked out in the coming weeks and a six week consultation period will take place from July. The changes will allow Australia to remain an attractive destination for foreign capital while safeguarding our national interest.

[Read more about Foreign Investment changes](#)

JobMaker Plan

The Prime Minister has outlined a JobMaker plan for the creation of jobs as part of Australia's economic recovery. The JobMaker plan focuses on the government's principles, skills reform and Industrial Relations.

Skills reform

Changing Australia's skills and training system will be a priority, as we look to create jobs in a labour market that is undergoing major change. Australians need to be better trained for the jobs businesses are looking to create. From a Federal level we are focusing on three key issues:

- The complexity of a system that is clunky and unresponsive to skills demands
- The lack of clear information about what those skills needs are now and into the future to guide training and funding, and
- A funding system marred by inconsistencies and incoherence, with little accountability back to outcomes.

Currently, the average timeframe to develop or update training products is 18 months, with a third taking over two years to update. For prospective students, the large number of choices that they face for qualifications can be bewildering. Compounded by a lack of visibility over the quality of training providers and the employment outcomes for those courses.

There are over 1,400 qualifications on offer and almost 17,000 units of competency. There is also substantial variation in fees for students depending on which state they are in. For example, in 2019, a student undertaking Certificate III in Blinds, Awning, Security Screens received a subsidy of \$3,726 in Queensland, \$9,630 in New South Wales and no subsidy in Victoria unless the qualification is taken as an apprenticeship.

All this will be looked at and reform attempted.

Industrial relations

Employers, employees, business groups and unions have worked together through this crisis to find practical solutions to keeping Australians in jobs. That unusual cooperation will be important in the creation of jobs, especially during this all important recovery phase.

The Minister for Industrial Relations has already begun leading a new, time-bound, dedicated process of bringing employers, industry groups, employee representatives and government to the table to chart a practical reform agenda for Australia's industrial relations system.

The Minister will chair five working groups dealing with the following areas.

- Award simplification
- Enterprise agreement making
- Casuals and fixed term employees
- Compliance and enforcement; and
- Greenfields agreements for new enterprises.

This process will run through to September.

Home Builder Program

The Morrison Government is supporting jobs in the residential construction sector with the introduction of the new HomeBuilder program.

Until 31 December 2020, HomeBuilder will provide all eligible owner-occupiers with a grant of \$25,000 to build a new home or substantially renovate an existing home. Construction must be contracted to commence within three months of the contract date.

HomeBuilder applicants will be subject to eligibility criteria, including income caps of \$125,000 for singles and \$200,000 for couples based on their latest assessable income. A national dwelling price cap of \$750,000 will apply for new home builds, and a renovation price range of \$150,000 up to \$750,000 will apply to renovating an existing home with a current value of no more than \$1.5 million.

This increase in residential construction will help to fill the gap in construction activity expected in the second half of 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic.

In doing so, HomeBuilder will help to support the 140,000 direct jobs and another 1,000,000 related jobs in the residential construction sector including businesses and sole-trader builders, contractors, property developers, construction materials manufacturers, engineers, designers and architects.

More information on HomeBuilder, including eligibility, can be found on the Treasury Coronavirus Economic Response website and in the Factsheet you can access by clicking on the link below.

[Home Builder Fact Sheet](#)

Funding to hospitals

Public hospitals across the country will have record funding for the next five years after all states and territories signed onto the Morrison Government's new health reform agreement.

This funding agreement will deliver more doctors, more nurses and more services across public hospitals in every state and territory. This commitment ensures the Australian health system remains stable and nationally coordinated.

Overall, the Commonwealth will invest an estimated \$131.4 billion in demand driven

public hospital funding over the next five years.

This funding will also enable:

- a small number of very sick children across Australia will receive lifesaving, high cost therapies such as immunotherapy, to reduce and rid cancer from their body, free of charge. This treatments usually cost up to \$500,000.
- more flexible care including rehabilitation after a stroke in the home. This provides better long term outcomes for patients. It will help many Australians with approximately 50,000 strokes occurring per year.
- people with some of the rarest conditions will have better access to new innovative life-saving high-cost therapies in public hospitals around the country.

This Agreement will ensure Australia's health system continues to be one of the best in the world, delivering the best possible health outcomes for Australians.

Queen's Birthday Honours List

Finally, congratulations to the following local residents who received awards in the Queen's Birthday Honours List.

Hon Philip Ruddock AO

Simon Finfer AO

Dr Bruce Harris AM

Dr David Bell OAM

Patrick McCabe OAM

Stuart Woodward OAM

James Passmore PSM

Jane Simmons PSM

Morgan Cook AFSM
