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INDEPENDENT FEDERAL MEMBER FOR INDI



Indi Mailbox

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Strong ideas for Indi's future

A Regional Tourism Infrastructure Fund is among proposals I've taken to government for the upcoming federal Budget.

With collaboration from Indi's nine local councils and business and community groups, I've put a submission to the Treasurer to help our communities recover. Priorities include:

- **\$146.7 million for a new Regional Tourism Infrastructure Fund for tourism recovery in bushfire and lockdown-affected communities**
- **Enabling regional infrastructure projects worth \$403 million to access existing or new funding programs**
- **An additional \$20 million for the Mobile Black Spot Program and \$15 million to build an Upper Murray renewable energy micro-grid to ensure resilient telecommunications and power supply**
- **Funding Albury Wodonga Health priority projects, including \$60 million for a new women and children's wing**

Ahead of the Budget on October 6, I've met with the Treasurer and key Ministers to push for these priorities to be funded.

PREPARED: The Budget is critical for Indi after the triple impact of the bushfire early this year, the nationwide COVID-19 shutdown from March to May and Victoria's stage 3 and 4 restrictions, and the NSW border closure.

\$75 million flows to Indi

That's the sum of federal grants delivered to Indi last financial year. Here's a snapshot of projects, services, communities and businesses that received grants:

- ✓ **\$219,394** COVID-19 Aged Care Meals on Wheels Grant for services in Towong, Benalla, Strathbogie and Wodonga
- ✓ **\$3,100,000** Childcare Service Support Grants to assist 62 Indi childcare services during COVID-19
- ✓ **\$64,000** Australian Heritage Grant to North East Catchment Management Authority for mountain pygmy possum and bogong moth conservation
- ✓ **\$302,500** Regional Tourism Bushfire Recovery Grant for the High Country Festival of Walks
- ✓ **\$22,000** Business Innovation Grant to Beechworth's Bridge Road Brewers
- ✓ **\$3500** Volunteer Grant to Bobbinawarra Soldier Memorial Hall

Source: Parliamentary Library

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Community action



Border challenges

Easing of COVID-19 Victorian border restrictions and widening of the border zone have been very welcome. But these wins have only come about because of the really strong advocacy of so many people – of everyday citizens, parliamentarians on the border, community and business leaders and mayors. I'll continue fighting hard so the federal government knows what support our Indi communities need.

Listening and acting

FRUSTRATION: Talking with Wodonga aborist Roger Williams about border closure impacts



Bushfire recovery

\$10,000 small business grant extended to December 31

If you run a business in Alpine, Indigo, Mansfield, Towong or Wangaratta council areas and you lost money because of summer bushfires, check out this grant. Belinda Sorrenson from Café Martini in Wangaratta used this grant to help pay the bills after summer's tourism losses. She says it was simple and easy to apply. It was only after I lobbied the state and federal governments that businesses in Indigo, Mansfield and Wangaratta were included. Call Rural Finance Victoria on 1800 260 425.

Effective representation



Education

Mansfield Autism Statewide Services

For over 50 years, Mansfield Autism Statewide Services has supported young people and families living with autism. Now it needs to expand its facilities to meet demand. I met with Education Minister Dan Tehan to put the case for a new term- and day-school with student housing, family accommodation and training facilities, sports hub, equine therapy centre and recreation facilities. This will enable Simone Reeves and Judy Dixon (pictured) and staff to transform lives beyond the 300 families who already rely on its services.

Advocating for education



Join the grant winners!

Got a fantastic idea for a project you want to get off the ground? Or does your community group need a little extra funding to bring that idea to life? On my website, check out easy-to-read 'how-to' guides and videos to step you through where to find grants, how to prepare for grant success, what a grant application looks like, how grant writers decide which projects get funded and how to acquit your grant project successfully.

Check my free Indi Funding Finder helenhaines.org/resources/grants

SUCCESS: With Rebecca and Justin Crawley, Dalla Mugarra and Jerry Bitting at Thamarurr Youth Indigenous Corporation Dumu Balcony Café in Bright.

Representing Indi in Parliament



Integrity

Australian Federal Integrity Commission

We are sick of waiting for the government to act on corruption. That's why I'm introducing bills to Parliament in October to establish an Australian Federal Integrity Commission and other integrity measures. This legislation meets the 'Beechworth Principles' standard, supported by a petition signed by 1969 people. This year's sports rorts scandal and party branch-stacking allegations show why we need a body to stamp out corruption. I will keep fighting to restore trust in our democracy.

Holding government to account

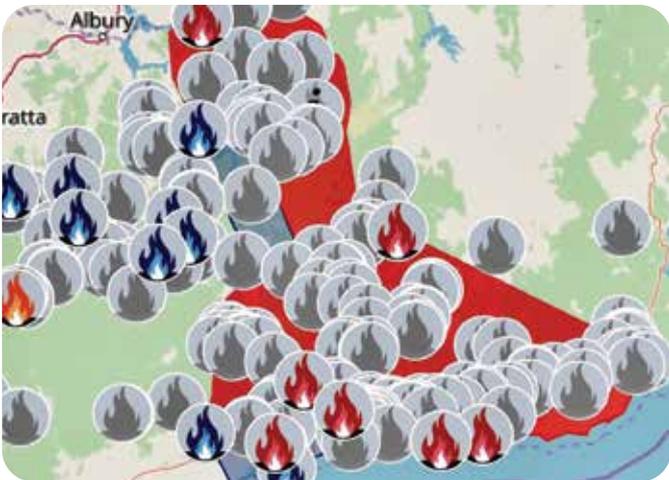


National Skills Commissioner Bill amendment

Government adopts my change to secure rural and regional focus

The new National Skills Commissioner will now focus on regional skill and workforce development, after a proposal I first put forward in June was adopted. Rural and regional Australians know that our access to education and training falls short of our city cousins. I am glad the Liberal-National Government finally saw sense and accepted this change.

Common-sense improvements



Australian Bushfire and Climate Plan

Investing in our firefighting capacity

I was proud to launch the Australian Bushfire and Climate Plan in Parliament early this month. The Plan was developed by former fire and emergency services chiefs through workshops in bushfire-affected communities. They make 165 recommendations about preventing, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from bushfires. This includes establishing permanent community resilience hubs in every bushfire-prone local government area.

Strengthening communities

**THE
LOCAL
POWER
PLAN.**

Community energy

The *Local Power Plan* is my plan for rural and regional communities right across the country to benefit from renewable energy. It will deliver cheaper power and new jobs where we live. In putting the plan together, I received 100 submissions from organisations and individuals across every state. The next step is to launch the Plan on September 23 at 10am before taking it to government.

Register for the launch at [helenhaines.org.au](https://www.helenhaines.org.au)

New jobs in our communities

Indi snapshots



Wodonga

The NSW government's closure of its border with Victoria has been challenging for many Wodonga businesses. I visited Kane Mathieson at Butcher On Rise in their central Wodonga store after the closure. I also spoke in Parliament on August 25 about the impact of the restrictions that were more onerous for border residents than those in Melbourne.



Benalla

D&R Henderson and other Indi timber processing companies employ 1400 people in the North East. The softwood sector was hit hard by summer's bushfires and I've pushed the government to support recovery. I met Benalla mayor Danny Claridge to discuss the latest \$40 million recovery fund announcement.



Flowerdale

Meeting the students in one of Indi's smaller communities was a winter highlight for me. Principal Sandra Horwood arranged for students to quiz me on federal, state and local government. They asked some better questions than in Question Time! Indi schools can discover more at the Parliamentary Education Office peo.gov.au



Wangaratta

The popular Farmers' Market has moved online so producers can keep selling fresh local food during COVID-19. Order Sunday to Wednesday every week and pick-up on Friday. It's doing a roaring trade, with sales of 80 boxes per week. wangarattafarmersmarket.com.au



Yea

Thanks to Yea and Kinglake people who braved the cold to visit my Pechell Street mobile office to discuss Cittaslow, Rubicon forest protection and other important issues. The streetside chat led to a productive virtual meeting with the Kinglake Ranges Business Network.



Euroa

Catherine Mosely is Euroa's only jeweller and her work captures the elements of Strathbogie's spirit. Strathbogie Local is another of the community's innovative enterprises – a distribution hub for local food producers offering online ordering ahead of pick-up.



Murmungee

The early birth of twins to market gardeners Felicity and Bernie Kennedy put harvest on hold in August. So Beechworth volunteers stepped in, picking, trimming, bunching and boxing turnips, kale, broccoli and rainbow chard that the couple donated to Albury Wodonga Regional FoodShare.



Corryong

Cudgewa's Joshua Levi Collings has bold plans for 'Acres and Acres', a community market garden, greenhouse, art space and event venue. This community-led recovery project is on track and securing support. It featured in a story in *Guardian Australia* in August.



Walwa

The Walwa Bush Nursing Centre has supported Upper Murray families through bushfire recovery, COVID-19 and the border closure. Sandi Grieve and business manager Melinda Short shared plans for their community's future during my visit to Walwa in early August.



Bright

Shelley Herman and staff at the Alpine Community Recovery Hub are doing great work. The hub provides a mobile service for Mount Beauty and Myrtleford every week, and helps people access family and mental health support, recovery grants and funding. Contact the Hub on 0429 529 700.

Please note: photographs showing Helen without a mask were taken before it became mandatory to wear one.