The Hon Daniel Andrews MP

Premier of Victoria

Tim Pallas MP

Treasurer

Monday, 27 May 2019

**KEEPING OUR PROMISES AND DELIVERING FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

We took a positive plan to the people of Victoria. With this year's Budget, we're delivering on that plan and keeping our promises.

That begins with a strong surplus. The *Victorian Budget 2019/20* continues the Andrews Labor Government’s strong and sensible approach to financial management, delivering a surplus of $1 billion, with surpluses averaging $3.4 billion over the forward estimates.

It is this solid foundation that enables us to deliver on all of the promises we made to the people of Victoria, with the Budget either beginning or acquitting every single one of our commitments.

That includes delivering a massive $27.4 billion Suburban Transport Blitz to radically reshape our suburbs and fundamentally change the way people get around.

A $3.4 billion investment will transform the suburban train network, with a massive upgrade to the Sunbury Line, Stage Two of the Hurstbridge Line Upgrade and duplication of the Cranbourne Line.

A further $15.8 billion will fully fund North East Link – just like we said we would. Thanks to our investment, this missing link in our network will finally be built, cutting travel times by up to 35 minutes and returning local roads to local drivers.

This year’s Budget also delivers a further $6.6 billion to remove another 25 level crossings – bringing our total to 75 crossings gone by 2025 – cutting congestion and making our communities safer.

And with $608 million to fix local roads, $163 million for new and upgraded trams, and $45.4 million to improve bike and footpaths, the Suburban Transport Blitz will get Victorians where they need to go.

We’re also continuing our rebuild of regional roads with a $425 million investment, while dedicating $615 million to deliver reliable and connected public transport for our regional communities, including $340 million to build up to 18 new VLocity trains, replacing older trains on some of Victoria’s busiest regional lines.

And as we continue the biggest transformation of our state’s road and rail, we’re also turning our attention to the next set of big projects, with funding to plan Melbourne Airport Rail, Suburban Rail Loop and the Western Rail Plan.

We’re also making sure our kids are ready for school and set for life, with $882 million to begin the rollout of universal three-year-old kinder, with communities in rural Victoria some of the first to benefit from 2020.

This investment will ensure that every three-year-old has access to at least five hours per week of subsidised kinder by 2022 – increasing to 15 hours per week over the next decade.

Led by qualified kindergarten teachers, this reform will nearly double the size of the kindergarten sector once fully rolled out. It’s why, in order to meet this demand, this year’s Budget includes $28.5 million to add early childhood courses to the Free TAFE list, while investing a total of $316 million in new kinder facilities.

Our investments extend to our hospitals, with $1.6 billion dedicated to ensuring quality care for Victorians. This includes fully funding $1.5 billion to build the new 504-bed Footscray Hospital, cutting wait times for local families and caring for almost an extra 15,000 patients.

An additional $81.6 million will build a new 120-bed aged care facility at Wantirna Health, while planning and early work gets underway at the Angliss Hospital in Ferntree Gully to provide upgraded facilities for local nurses and doctors.

The Labor Government is also establishing the brand-new $2.6 billion Delivering for Regional and Rural Victorians Program, ensuring that every community and every corner of our state shares in Victoria’s success, while also creating 4,500 jobs.

And just as we promised, $136 million will deliver an extra 500,000 appointments with medical specialists in regional Victoria, ensuring patients can spend less time travelling and more time with their loved ones. A $59.5 million Budget investment will deliver a new rehab centre at Bendigo Hospital, bringing together vital services including prosthetics, physiotherapy and occupational therapy.

And in a win for local jobs, this Budget again delivers tax cuts for business, with the payroll tax-free threshold to be increased by $50,000 to $700,000 by 2022-23. Regional payroll tax rate will also be cut to 25 per cent of the metropolitan rate by 2022-23, so that eligible regional businesses continue to benefit from the lowest payroll tax rate in the nation.

Students across the state will have a brighter smile, thanks to free dental care at all Victorian government schools. This year’s Budget begins that rollout with school visits this year, with an initial investment of $322 million.

This Budget will also ensure new mums and dads get the advice and assistance they need, with seven new parenting centres, extra sleep and settling support and brand-new baby bundles for first time parents.

We’re also putting power back in the hands of Victorians, with this year’s Budget delivering on the Labor Government’s positive plan, investing $1.3 billion to install solar panels, hot water or batteries at 770,000 homes over the next decade.

And to make sure every family can have confidence about their child’s future – and delivering on our commitment to open 100 new schools – we’re investing $1.8 billion to build 17 new schools and upgrade 109 more.

These are the things we said we would do. And with this Budget, we’re keeping our promises and delivering for all Victorians.

**Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews**

*“This Budget delivers on every single one of the commitments we made to the people of Victoria. Because when we make a promise, we keep it.”*

*“From upgrading the roundabout at the end of your street to building our state’s biggest transport projects, this Budget will get you where you need to go.”*

*“We’re delivering on our positive plan, with solar panels on roofs, healthy smiles on our kids and three-year-old kinder for every Victorian child.”*

**Quotes attributable to Treasurer Tim Pallas**

*“We promised to maintain a strong economy and a strong surplus – with this Budget that’s exactly what we’ve delivered.”*

*“We’re continuing our Big Build, making sure our growing state has the road and rail, schools and hospitals we need for today and tomorrow.”*