

South Australian Labor Budget Reply 2021-22 June 2021

On Thursday 24 June 2021, South Australian Labor Leader Peter Malinauskas MP delivered the 2021-22 Budget in Reply. Labor will continue to announce further policies ahead of the 19 March 2022 election.

Mr Malinauskas characterised the Liberal's Budget as one of unprecedented borrowing, lacking a debt pay back plan. Mr Malinauskas suggested that the Budget presented no new ideas or reforms to address structural issues such as the State's growing unemployment rate.

Policy Announcements

Health

An elected Labor government will turn over the Liberal's plan for a \$662 million Riverbank Arena Basketball Stadium and instead has committed to using those allocated funds for hospitals and ambulance services.

Mr Malinauskas condemned the Liberal Budget for reducing overall health funding and reducing staffing in light of the COVID-19 epidemic and instances of ambulance 'ramping'. Labor will deliver \$100 million of these funds to country health initiatives for those living rurally and regionally.

Education

A Malinauskas Labor government will commit to major reforms in South Australia's higher education sector. Specifically, Labor intend to amalgamate the three major universities in South Australia: University of Adelaide, University of South Australia and Flinders University.

Mr Malinauskas noted that this was a controversial policy but necessary to raise the ranks of South Australia's universities worldwide, ensuring better staffing and funding arrangements and helping to ensure that South Australian residents stay home to study.

Renewables

Mr Malinauskas remarked that the Premier's Budget speech contained zero mentions of climate change and that the Budget represented a lack of commitment in this space. The Labor Leader noted that there was only a commitment for \$2.1 million in two years towards clean energy initiatives.

Mr Malinauskas also criticised the Liberal government for implementing taxes on electric vehicles which would stifle market growth opportunities.

As announced earlier in the year, an elected Labor government will invest \$593 million into a hydrogen power plant, powering between 60 000 and 90 000 homes by the end of 2025. This includes a 250-megawatt hydrogen electrolyser and a hydrogen storage unit capable of holding 3600 tonnes of hydrogen.

Labor's hydrogen project will be one of the largest in the world and aims to deliver significant jobs in addition to cheaper and cleaner energy.



Innovation and Skills

An elected Labor government has committed to producing mRNA vaccines in Adelaide and assured the Liberal government that there would be bi-partisan support to cooperate on vaccine production.

The Labor Leader noted that the Liberal's Budget presents a \$143 million decline in funding for innovation and skills which was disappointing given the increasing unemployment rate.

Tourism

The Labor Leader remarked that the Liberal Budget made no commitments to tourism funding or announcements of new events. Mr Malinauskas noted that there has been no event announcement to replace the Adelaide 500, a motor racing event cancelled by the State government in October 2020.

Further information

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