

ACT Parliamentary & Governing Agreement

November 2020

On Monday 2 November 2020, the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Chief Minister and Treasurer, Andrew Barr MLA, delivered the Parliamentary and Governing Agreement for the 10th Legislative Assembly.

The Agreement is between Andrew Barr MLA, Leader of the Australian Labor Party ACT Branch, Yvette Berry MLA, Deputy Leader of the Australian Labor Party ACT Branch, the ACT Labor MLAs elected for the 10th Assembly, and Shane Rattenbury MLA, ACT Greens Leader, and the ACT Greens MLAs elected for the 10th Assembly.

The Joint Media Release is available [here](#).

The Agreement details the way the two parties will work together including:

- Shared Progressive Principles and Values
- Stable Government
- Appointment of ACT Greens Ministers
- Cabinet decision-making
- Request for information or briefings

The Agreement also outlines key policy issues of particular interest, including:

- Next steps on climate change action
- More and better Housing Options for all Canberrans
- Action to improve Canberra's planning system
- Building Light Rail Stage 2
- Reducing harm from gaming while supporting sustainable clubs
- Early Childhood education

The Agreement includes the legislative and administrative reform agenda, ACT Labor's policy platform and ACT Greens policy platform. ACT Labor's policy platform includes:

- Protecting local jobs
- Delivering high quality health care for Canberrans
- Education
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy
- Building quality
- Public transport zero-emissions transition
- Emergency services
- Integrity in government
- City Services, active travel and roads
- Higher Education, Research and Skills
- Continuing Tax Reform
- Workers' rights and workplace safety
- Arts and creative industries



Text of the Parliamentary and Governing Agreement

The ACT Labor and ACT Greens Parliamentary and Governing Agreement for the 10th Australian Capital Territory Legislative Assembly represents the parties' shared commitment to serve the people of the ACT.

ACT Labor and the ACT Greens will continue to provide the ACT with stable and effective Government.

Once appointed as Chief Minister, Andrew Barr will appoint three Greens MLAs as Ministers, as nominated by the ACT Greens party room. Ministerial portfolios will be allocated by the Chief Minister in accordance with the Australian Capital Territory Self-Government Act.

ACT Labor and Greens MLAs will vote in support of the Labor and Greens Government in the Assembly on all matters unanimously endorsed by Cabinet.

Non-Executive Greens and Labor MLAs may seek information on portfolio matters from the responsible Minister.

The ACT Labor and ACT Greens Whips will communicate prior and during sitting periods to advise each other of MLA absences and any pairing agreements with the Opposition, to ensure a working parliamentary majority is maintained at all time.

The Parties agree to act in good faith and with no surprises, reflecting appropriate notice and consultation in matters relating to communication of this Agreement.

The ACT Greens will also support ACT Labor's nomination for Speaker.

Policy Areas of Particular Interest

Next steps on climate change action

The parties agree that the world is facing a climate change emergency, and commit to undertaking rapid, science-based action to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and transition the ACT to net zero emissions. The parties also commit to working closely with the community, ensuring a just transition for those impacted by the shift to net zero emissions, and growing sustainable industries and jobs.

The ACT Labor and Greens Agreement will take the next essential steps to a net zero-emissions ACT by phasing out fossil-fuel-gas in the ACT by 2045 at the latest, supporting energy grid stability and supporting vulnerable households.

More and better Housing Options for all Canberrans

The ACT Labor and Greens Government will improve social housing and housing affordability over the next four years as part of the roadmap for increased supply of affordable housing that is outlined in the ACT Housing Strategy.

The ACT Labor and Greens Government acknowledge that continued growth and renewal of social housing and increased affordable housing supply is required to meet housing need in the ACT.

Action to improve Canberra's planning system

The ACT Labor and Greens Government will improve and simplify the ACT's planning system, by completing the current planning review, in consultation with Canberrans, to deliver a planning

system that is clear, easy to use and provides improved spatial and built outcomes across the Territory

The review objectives are:

- Simplification of the planning system
- Facilitation of residential development and housing supply while ensuring Canberra remains sustainable, liveable and attractive
- Improving community confidence through system clarity
- Incorporation of character, context and design as key elements of the system
- Enabling greater flexibility in the assessment of varying development types
- Provision of a pathway to achieve net zero emissions

Building Light Rail Stage 2

The ACT Labor and Greens Government commits to build Light Rail Stage 2 to Woden.

Both parties have agreed to:

- Proceed to procure the design and construction of Light Rail Stage 2 as soon as possible following assessment of infrastructure procurement options.
- Assess the viability and benefits of extending light rail to Mawson as part of the Stage 2B business case.
- Without setting back planning, design and construction of the Stage 2 project, conduct an examination of the feasibility and cost of introducing express light rail services in peak periods.

Reducing harm from gaming while supporting sustainable clubs

The ACT Labor and Greens Government recognises that community clubs play an essential part in the social life of many Canberrans, as a meeting place and sponsor of community events. They will ensure clubs continue to support the community, while introducing and strictly enforcing measures to further reduce harm from gaming.

Early Childhood education

The ACT Labor and Greens Government will improve equitable access to early childhood education and care over the next four years as part of the roadmap outlined in Set Up for Success: An Early Childhood Strategy for the ACT which includes staged delivery of universal access to early learning for three year old children in the ACT. All three-year-olds will be able to access one day per week of early childhood education, 48 weeks a year, by 2024.

Legislative and Administrative Reform Agenda

Agreed Legislative Reform includes:

1. Establish industrial manslaughter as an offence in the Work Health and Safety Act
2. Amend the Portable Long Service Scheme to ensure more workers receive fair entitlements as they move jobs in their profession
3. Legislate to ban any political donations from foreign sources
4. Introduce 'real time' political donation reporting within seven days of receipt of a large donation
5. Ensure ACT legislation can identify and effectively respond to modern day slavery

Agreed Executive Reform includes:

1. Implement a whole of government policy that government services will not be contracted out where they could be performed by public servants
2. Require larger public service entities to have gender action plans, undertake gender impact assessment and publish their results
3. Require employee and consumer representation on the board of major ACT territory owned corporations or Government businesses
4. Explore options to recognise a Sport and Recreation Industry Peak Body to support the sector respond to the challenges of COVID-19 and beyond
5. Explore establishment of a dedicated full time Coroners Court

Agreed Administrative Reform

The Parties agree to further examine options to address the following issues:

1. Ensuring a holistic approach to government budgets, decision-making and reporting, including consistent, meaningful and measurable strategic and accountability indicators based on wellbeing
2. Strengthen the Cabinet circulation process to ensure all agencies and statutory offices have adequate chance to review and make comments on papers and to properly engage with those views
3. Increasing open and transparent access to government information, thereby reducing the need for Freedom of Information Act applications
4. Ensuring all MLAs have access to climate impact analyses of proposed legislation, where relevant
5. A review of statutory office holder independence including whether any other statutory office holders should be made Officers of the Parliament

ACT Labor Policy Platform for the 10th Assembly

ACT Labor took a comprehensive package of ongoing policies and programs, and new election commitments, to the electorate in the 2020 election campaign, focusing particularly on protecting local jobs, strengthening our health and education systems, and addressing climate change

Please refer to ACT Labor's Policy Position Statement, and associated Health, Education, Jobs, Environment, Climate Change, and Better Suburbs Statements can be found [here](#).

Protecting local jobs

The ACT Labor Government will act to protect and create secure local jobs. This term, the Government will:

- Grow the ACT's employment base to more than 250,000 local jobs by 2025, including creating and supporting over 2,000 jobs through our package of renewable energy policies
- Continue the \$4 billion pipeline of significant job-creating infrastructure projects such as Light Rail Stage 2, the Canberra Hospital Expansion, the new CIT Woden Campus, a new multipurpose indoor facility at EPIC, and new schools
- Establish Choose CBR digital discount program to incentivise spending with eligible businesses that need it most, in industries like tourism, hospitality, and retail.
- Maintain the size and real wages of the public sector to deliver the essential services a growing community needs
- Ensure workers' rights are upheld and strengthened in all sectors across the ACT

Delivering high quality health care for Canberrans

The ACT Labor Government will deliver high quality health care when and where Canberrans need it. To continue to strengthen Canberra's health system, the Government will:

- Employ an additional 400 doctors, nurses and allied health workers this term
- Continue to provide accessible COVID-19 testing facilities across Canberra for as long as is needed
- Expand the range of services available at our five nurse-led walk-in centres
- Roll out five new local walk-in health centres in South Tuggeranong, West Belconnen, North Gungahlin, Molonglo and the Inner South between 2021-22 and the middle of the decade, offering accessible public health care across Canberra
- Deliver 60,000 elective surgeries over the next four years, and establish an Elective Surgery Centre on the University of Canberra campus
- Complete the major expansion of the Canberra Hospital, delivering the biggest healthcare infrastructure investment since self-government, with a new emergency, surgical and critical care facility to ensure we keep meeting the acute care needs of Canberra and region residents
- Continue the planning and design work for a new northside hospital, with the aim to start construction by mid-decade
- Invest \$15 million in more mental health support for Canberra's young people

Education

The ACT Labor Government believes in providing a high-quality education to every child, and in welcoming and helping all children to reach their potential. To keep delivering on this principle, in this term the Government will:

- Continue to implement our Future of Education Strategy, which prioritises equity and inclusion. This includes continuing the successful provision of free Chromebooks to all public high school students, trialling free meals at five public schools, and establishing a \$12 million Education Equity Fund to help parents buy school uniforms, glasses and sports clothes, and pay for excursions and camps, so all children can fully participate in school life.
- Finalise construction of a new public primary school in Molonglo, to be ready for students for the 2021 school year, with a co-located high school to open in 2023
- Commence construction on new high schools in Taylor and Kenny, and a new primary school in North Gungahlin
- Renew and upgrade Narrabundah College
- Increase capacity for college students in Canberra's North through a \$50 million investment over the next term of government
- Invest \$130 million over four years in a school infrastructure maintenance, upgrade and renewal program

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy

The Government is committed to self-determination and Closing the Gap in outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Canberrans, and to the Uluru Statement of the Heart. To progress these goals, the Government will work with the ACT's traditional custodians and our diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, to:

- Establish a 10 year, \$20 million Healing and Reconciliation Fund
- Continue the ACT Reconciliation Day public holiday
- Deliver a purpose-built facility with the Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation to better deliver essential services

- Support the development of sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled organisations in areas such as child and family services, justice, housing and disability
- Undertake discussions on Treaty with traditional owners, informed by Treaty processes underway around the nation

Building quality

This term, the Government will:

- Establish an expert team of publicly funded building certifiers within the ACT Public Service
- Set up an Australia-first licensing scheme for property developers, including the creation of a “fit and proper person” test and rigorously enforced penalty scheme
- Introduce a registration scheme for engineers

Public transport zero-emissions transition

Alongside the initiatives on zero emission vehicle incentives outlined in the Agreement, the Government will continue to transition Canberra’s entire public bus fleet to zero emissions by buying 90 battery electric buses in the next term, building a new zeroemissions bus depot in Canberra’s North and building electric bus infrastructure at the new Woden Depot

Emergency services

Following the devastating bushfires that swept through the ACT in January 2020, and to cater to a growing city, the Government will:

- Recruit an additional 99 new firefighters and add new fire trucks and equipment
- Build new fire and ambulance stations in the City and Molonglo

Integrity in government

Over the past term, the Government established the ACT Integrity Commission, considered Australia’s strongest integrity framework. Legislation was passed banning property developers making donations to political parties. This term, the Government will continue to strengthen public confidence in the integrity of public administration by:

- Introducing legislation that bans any donations from foreign sources, to apply to all parties and candidates
- Include in the post-election Electoral Act Inquiry terms of reference an examination of options to reduce the risk of potential foreign interference or influence over ACT election processes and political parties
- Progress a broader definition of “lobbyist” to strengthen the existing lobbyist register

City Services, active travel and roads

The ACT Labor Government will commit to:

- Invest \$22 million upgrading 12 shopping and business precincts in the next four years
- Roll out a household food waste collection service by 2023, starting with a pilot program in Belconnen next year
- Continue the essential roads construction and upgrade program, including major upgrades to the Monaro Highway, duplication of major arterial roads, and construction of the
- Molonglo River Bridge

- Roll out an active travel plan, including construction of an off-road shared path along Sulwood Drive, starting construction of the Garden city cycle route, and extension of the Belconnen bikeway
- Undertake urban realm upgrades including better playgrounds, new amenities at Yerrabi Pond, widening the Lake Ginninderra path, age-friendly suburbs, a half pipe at the Belconnen skatepark, and replacing and repairing suburban footpaths
- Provide a free bulky waste collection service to every house in Canberra by 2021
- Co-design a new library and community centre in the Molonglo Valley

Higher Education, Research and Skills

The ACT Labor Government will commit to:

- Establish the \$30 million Future Jobs Fund to provide grants and access to funding that attracts investment from local universities and/or the private sector to save and create new jobs
- Keep CIT in public hands, with at least 75 per cent of total VET funding to be provided to CIT as the primary provider of Canberra's vocational education and training
- Provide our higher education institutions with zero-cost payroll tax deferrals as they deal with the loss of income from international students

Continuing Tax Reform

The Government will continue tax reform by cutting stamp duty in every ACT Budget, focusing on supporting prospective owner-occupiers to buy a home.

Workers' rights and workplace safety

The Government will continue to implement its platform of protecting Canberra workers through a range of measures, including:

- Continuing and reviewing the effectiveness of the Secure Local Jobs Code, to ensure it is meeting its objective that all businesses obtaining Government contracts are meeting high ethical and labour standards
- Introduce stronger workplace regulations to protect tradespeople who are exposed to silica dust
- We will support fair working conditions for Canberrans and ensure workers receive fair entitlements by reviewing the Portable Long Service Leave Scheme

Arts and creative industries

Canberra's arts and creative sector has been badly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Government will support artists and build the facilities to ensure the arts continue to play an integral role in our community, by:

- Continuing the Canberra Theatre Centre expansion and redevelopment project
- Introducing a new winter innovation and visual arts festival
- Upgrading Gorman House and the Tuggeranong Arts Centre
- Continuing grants provision and improving transparency through a new funding framework, in close consultation with the sector
- Running major signature events, including Enlighten and Floriade in new and interesting Covid-safe ways, for the enjoyment of all Canberrans and visitors



ACT Greens Policy Platform for the 10th Assembly

The ACT Greens took a comprehensive package of election commitments to the electorate in the 2020 election campaign. These focused on building a better normal through real climate action, a home for all, modern transport, healing the environment, a stronger democracy and supporting our community. Please refer to ACT Greens Policy Initiatives at <https://greens.org.au/act/better-normal>

Further information

For more information, please contact your Hawker Britton consultant [Simon Banks](#) on +61 419 638 587.