

MURCHISON MATTERS

Quarterly Update



Hon Ruth Forrest MLC

Independent Member for Murchison

Happy New Year

2020 will be a busy year, with a lot happening in Parliament as well as around the electorate!

In November last year my office moved to 32 Goldie Street, Wynyard, opposite the RSL. This modern new space is bright and welcoming, and is more accessible to constituents. I invite you to call in for a visit. I will also be visiting all areas of my electorate regularly.

I will be actively engaged in debates in Parliament this year dealing with issues including political donations, fin fish farming, 'pokies' reform, our State economy, access to health services, end of life decision-making including legislation to legalise euthanasia, as well as a number of other areas.

2020 School Year Begins

Families with children will be well aware that school has resumed for another year. It is lovely to see all the back to school photos on social media of excited children and young people heading off to continue or start their education journey.

Access to quality education remains a key priority and one which I will continue to advocate for.

As I travel around the electorate, I call into local schools whenever possible, to keep up to date, engage with students, hear and see first hand what students are learning and witness the fantastic work that is being done, by both staff and students!

It is also a time for to remember to obey speed limits and pay attention in and around schools zones and designated school bus stops to ensure our children remain safe both at school and as they travel to and from school.



Australia Day Awards

This year I attended Australia Day Award ceremonies in Circular Head, Wynyard and Burnie.

A warm welcome to all our new Australian citizens.

Congratulations to all those who received awards or whose service was recognised as part of our celebrations. It is wonderful to see the selfless contributions of our community members being acknowledged by our community often recognising many hours of voluntary work. We sincerely thank you all.

2020 Australia Day Awardees:

Waratah Wynyard:

Citizen of the Year: Leanne Griffiths.

Young Citizen of the Year: Laylah Griffiths.

Community Event of the Year: Wynyard Foreshore Park Run

Circular Head:

Citizen of the year: Ian King.

Young citizen of the Year: Joel Kay.

Senior Citizen of the Year: Kevin Radford.

Community Event of the Year: Circular Head Pony Club - Tasmania State Horse Trials

Burnie:

Citizen of the Year: Adele Britton.

Senior Citizen of the Year: Barry Burge.

Young Citizen of the Year: Jakob Glover.

Community Event of the Year: 2019 Burnie Show.

King Island:

Citizen of the Year: Troy Smith. Young

Citizen of the Year: Matthew Button.

Community Event of the Year: Foundations to Flourish.

West Coast Spirit Awards:

Mark McDermott and Fiona Ebert

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Pokies Reform

Legislation will come to Parliament this year to reform the legal arrangements for gaming machines' ('pokies') licenses, taxation regime & regulation. I remain concerned about the harmful impact on many individuals, families and communities in Tasmania of these machines as they are designed to be addictive. These design features can, & should be removed, to reduce the real risk of harm. As with all legislation coming to Parliament, I will fully scrutinise all aspects of the legislation & will be commenting publicly on a number of related issues prior to & during this time.

The Advocate newspaper recently published an opinion piece I wrote on some aspects I believe need to be addressed in the upcoming reforms.

This can be accessed on my website:
www.ruthforrest.com.au/opinion

International Year of the Nurse & Midwife

2020 is the year to thank all our wonderful nurses & midwives so whenever you see a nurse or midwife—thank them for all the care they selflessly provide to us when we need them the most!

GP Services

Many rural & regional GP practices are facing challenges attracting doctors to work permanently in the surgeries. Health promotion, chronic disease management & illness prevention remain key to preventing hospital admissions & keeping us healthy. GP's & nurses play a vital role in our communities & must be supported to ensure that a safe, accessible & affordable service can be provided. I will continue to work with all areas to promote equitable access.

Did you know...

You can view Parliament in session via the live webcast on the Parliament of Tasmania website: <http://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/>



End-of-Life Choices (Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill) 2020

Later this year Hon Mike Gaffney MLC, will introduce assisted dying legislation to Parliament. The draft End of Life Choices (Assisted Dying) Bill 2020 has been released and a number of information forums are being held around the state in February. I encourage you to attend if possible and I welcome your feedback on the broad issues of end of life care and choices as well as the legislation.

Robbins Island and Jim's Plains Windfarms

I visited Robbins Island & Jim's Plains at the end of January to get a greater understanding of the proposed UPC wind farm. A great deal of research and investigation as well as consultation with stakeholders has taken place in regard to this proposal.

I encourage members of the Circular Head community to participate in public information sessions & conversations and/or contact me if you want to know more, discuss any concerns and/or show support.



Medicinal Cannabis

Access to medicinal cannabis in Tasmania is extremely limited and many people who may benefit from a well regulated, quality controlled medication are unable to access this. For patients with intractable epilepsy, that has not responded to conventional medications, severe nausea & poor appetite associated with chemotherapy & severe pain experienced by some patients at the end of life are seeking access to this medication. Research is ongoing into long term effects. I will continue to advocate for access to medicinal cannabis for those people who have life limiting illnesses & symptoms that are unrelieved by conventional drugs.