

By-election: Roy Reekie on rail



[box]ROY REEKIE is running as an independent in the by-election for South West Coast. Here he writes about improving the rail service:[/box]

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[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A02F2F;"]I[/dropcap]n what's been a confusing by-election so far, we have our first certainty. The South West will get its extra daily train service.

Last Wednesday, Opposition Leader Matthew Guy stood at Warrnambool station, flanked by a bank of dark suits, to announce that 'a Coalition government' would introduce a fourth daily service from Warrnambool; that is, *IF* the Coalition is elected back into government in 2018 or some election beyond. That's not much of a guarantee. There are too many ifs and too much waiting.

I can go one better.

If I'm elected as your independent member for South West Coast on 31 October, I guarantee that we will have an additional daily train service out of Warrnambool by this time next year.

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I will also work with the community and the government to reform our train service to improve comfort, reliability, frequency and guaranteed, no excuses inclusion of people with mobility issues. I will make the train service safer and more convenient for older people and young families. I will work on the government and the opposition to achieve a long term infrastructure investment plan for track upgrades and duplications so that our future rail services are faster, more comfortable and modern. This is what's required; not just a promise of an additional train here and there.

How will I do this? On Wednesday next week , I will announce my comprehensive rail policy at Warrnambool station just prior to the lunchtime train. Then, you need to vote on October 31 to make South West Coast marginal. If I'm elected, I'll take it from there and deliver what we need.

I welcome the Coalition's commitment to an extra train service. I don't think it goes far enough or will happen soon enough, but I welcome it. And I say this to Mr Guy and Mr Walsh: if I'm elected, I expect your full support on the floor of the Parliament on this issue.

Roy Reekie

Ferguson Street Warrnambool.

(PO Box 882 Warrnambool 3280

Facebook: Roy Reekie, Independent candidate for South West Coast)

By-election: Michael McCluskey on education



[box]MICHAEL McCLUSKEY is running as an independent in the by-election for South West Coast. Here he writes about improving education:[/box]

[quote]

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #8F9F59;"]A[/dropcap>ccess to affordable education is a cornerstone pillar of how successful a society is when it comes to economic and social development. If we look at any community throughout the world the more freedom people have in being

able to access education, the more developed and evolved that society becomes particularly in relation to it's economic and social well being.

Many studies have shown a strong association between better education and economic growth. The impact of this education continues throughout generations owing to the fact that educated individuals are more likely to nurture healthier and more educated generations

Education is one of the key determinants of an individual's empowerment within their society. It is one of the reasons why totalitarian regimes try to prevent the access of children, especially young girls, to a full and broad education. The International Conference on Population and Development has stated that 'Education is one of the most important means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to participate fully in the development process.' Also a study by the International Centre for Research on Women highlighted that 'Women are more likely to control their own destinies and effect change in their own communities when they have higher levels of education'.

Education needs to be thought of as a 'many rather than one' pathway.

I think we need to be cautious in our tendency to sometimes believe that Year 12 and beyond is 'the be all and end all' of education. The trade, technical and other creative pathways are all valid and important pathways and it is crucial we provide and foster the options that best suit each individual rather than trying to push people down paths that might not be a good fit for them.

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The Victorian ombudsman's recent report on prisoner rehabilitation highlights the importance of the link between education access and social well being. The report noted that the Year 12 or equivalent completion rate amongst Victorian prisoners has varied between 5 and 7 per cent over the last decade compared to a Year 12 completion rate of 89% for 20-24 year olds in the general population.

I also lament the way the Victorian TAFE system has been underfunded in recent times. It may take a number of years before we fully appreciate the economic and social cost of having failed to properly fund our TAFE system.

I struggle to see the wisdom in bringing in large numbers of foreign workers on 457 work visas on one hand and then on the other failing to provide a well funded and sustainable education system that could train up the skilled workers we need from within our own community.

Our political system needs to do all it can to improve the accessibility to education at all levels for all people.

Dr Michael McCluskey B.V.Sc. (Hons.)

Independent Candidate

South-West Coast electorate

(8 Megan Ct, W'bool.)

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offers hope

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