

Why I am running: Dr Denis Naphthine



Premier Dr Denis Naphthine, who is also the current member for Great South Coast, hopes voters will judge him on his track record. Image: Supplied.

Dr Denis Naphthine has been an MP since 1988, representing first the seat of Portland and then, under new electoral boundaries, the seat of South West Coast. He became Premier of Victoria in 2013. Having made it to the top – and after more than 25 years in office – why does he wish to run again? He writes for us to explain all:

[dropcap style="color: #a5cecd;"] F [/dropcap]irstly, I would like to congratulate *Bluestone* on its first birthday.

I believe that a vote for me and my government on 29 November

is a vote for a better Victoria, one that is more prosperous, smarter and more secure.

I am proud to call south-west Victoria home.

I have a proven track record of delivering for South West Coast and its communities and, if re-elected by my constituents on 29 November, will continue to do so.

Over the past three-and-a-half years I have been delivering on my 2010 election promises. These include a new school for Woolsthorpe, a pedestrian overpass over the Portland Ring Road, seven new passing lanes on the Princes Highway, a passing loop on the Melbourne to Warrnambool rail line, a new police residence at Heywood, Avgas facilities at the Portland airport, and returning local rangers to Tower Hill and Mount Eccles, among many others.

And soon a cancer centre will be a reality for the south-west. I am pleased to have helped secure funding of \$15 million for this life-saving centre – a project I have been particularly passionate about.



Traffic chaos on the West Gate Bridge makes the proposed East-West link roadway essential,

according to Dr Naphthine. Image: [ABC Online.](#)

[dropcap style="color: #a5cecd;"] I [/\dropcap]n May's State Budget I was able to deliver funding for a new school at Narrawong, a vital upgrade of the Woolsthorpe-Heywood road and other local roads, additional mental health beds for South West Healthcare at Warrnambool and a new community health facility at Port Fairy.

I have also announced a \$4.9 million upgrade of Warrnambool airport; a \$7.7 million boost for South West TAFE to allow the institute to offer affordable, accessible and high quality training programs anytime, anywhere on any device; a Master Plan for the Lady Bay area and new emergency vehicles for our hard working volunteers.

As part of the Coalition's *Fairer Water Bills Initiative*, residential customers of Wannon Water will receive a \$70 rebate on their water bills each financial year for the next four years.

I am also extremely proud of the work my government is doing for all Victorians.

East West Link is a vital project for all Victorians. I know that the many south-west Victorians who drive to Melbourne will benefit from this infrastructure project. How many people have been stuck in traffic waiting to get over the West Gate Bridge? Melbourne desperately needs a second river crossing and anybody who lives west of Melbourne and regularly drives to Melbourne knows that.

In terms of public transport, there are now 10,000 more public transport services per week than when we came to office; from January 1, there will be free tram travel in the CBD and Zone 1 and 2 travel for the price of a Zone 1 fare; we will build the Melbourne Rail Link and a Melbourne airport rail link as well as the \$2 billion Cranbourne-Pakenham line upgrade.

Our Government is also completing the \$4.1 billion regional rail link which will benefit v/line passengers from Western Victoria as well as metropolitan commuters from the western and north western Suburbs.



Dr Napthine says education has been a priority for the Coalition Government, with a record spend of \$9.2 billion this year . Image: Peaceinmyhome.com

[dropcap style="color: #a5cecd;"] A[/dropcap]s a result of the Coalition Government's sound economic management, Victoria is the only Australian state or territory with the coveted AAA credit rating and with budget surpluses forecast across the next four years.

This careful stewardship of the state's finances ensures there is more money available to fund the services families need now, and the important infrastructure our children and grandchildren will need in the future.

My Coalition Government is proud to be spending a record \$15 billion this year on our vital health services and a record

\$9.2 billion on school education.

We have also increased police numbers by 1700 and put 940 PSOs on our railway stations. Our tough approach to law and order is delivering a safer community.

I am particularly proud of our proven commitment to vulnerable Victorians. Since coming to government, the Coalition has increased spending on vulnerable children and families by \$900 million. This includes \$100 million per annum on family violence, a 40 per cent increase since coming to government.

I am also passionate about delivering better services for people with a disability. That is why the Coalition is committed to the full rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) which is now located in Geelong.

Be it here in the south-west, or more broadly across Victoria, my government is delivering the projects and programs that we need now and our children will need in the future.

That is why I urge you to support me and my government as we seek a second term on 29 November.

[button link="http://the-terrier.com.au/subscribe-2/" type="icon" icon="heart" newwindow="yes"] Did you enjoy this story? Please subscribe here to become part of Bluestone.[/button]



You might also enjoy...

[Why I am running: Thomas Campbell, the Greens](#)

[Why I am running: Roy Reekie, ALP](#)

[Reekie to challenge Napthine for South West Coast](#)

[Community vision needs to extend city wide: Julie Eagles](#)

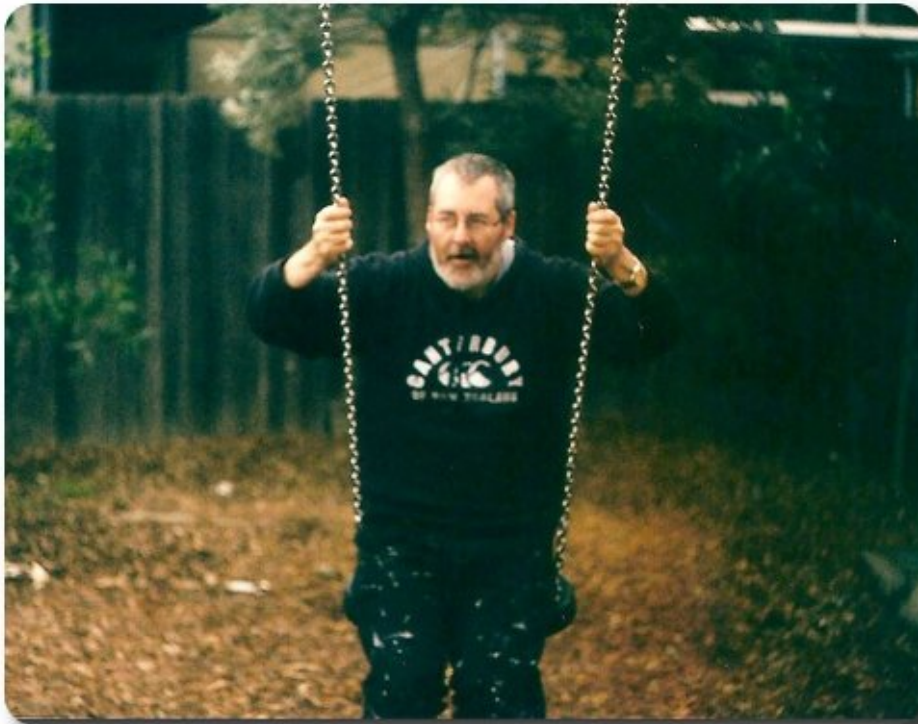
[Forget cover ups: roll right over Rolf](#)

[What is holding Portland back?](#)

Why I am running: Thomas Campbell, The Greens

Why is Thomas Campbell running for the Greens?

Why am I running? Roy Reekie ALP



Labor candidate Roy Reekie will be aiming for the swinging voter when he takes on Dr Denis Napthine for the seat of South West Coast at the November state election.

[box] Roy Reekie has chosen a Q&A style for his piece. The questions were selected by an interested observer, not *Bluestone Magazine*. [/box]

[dropcap style="color: #dc943c;"] R [/dropcap>oy, the margin of the Liberal Party in South West Coast is nearly 12%. No-one else seems to have been interested in running for the Labor Party in this election. Why are you running?

When I first ran in 1999, it was about getting a few key issues on the agenda – logging of native forests in the Otways and the impact of pokies. We had a win in getting logging stopped in the Otways, but pokies are still the scourge they were.

When I ran again in 2002, it was about building some momentum to make the South West marginal. We got awfully close (well under 1%) but couldn't quite get there.

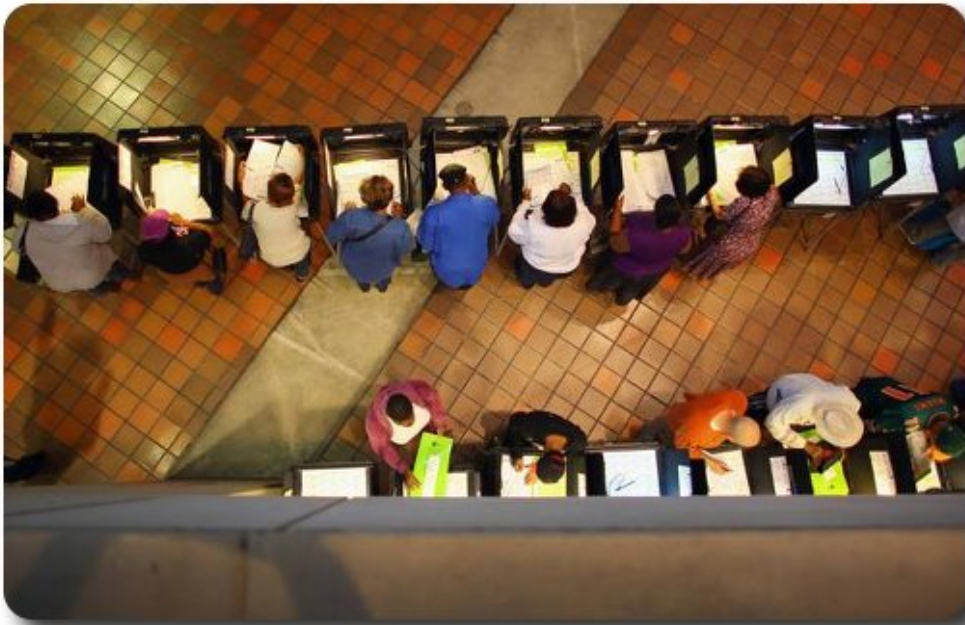
I knew that was about as close as we might ever get, but felt honour-bound to run again in 2006. That was about making Dr Napthine accountable for the things he had promised in 2002 and trying to squeeze as much as we could out of our seat's marginal status. We got a huge amount for South West Healthcare and multi-millions for Portland Hospital and schools in Warrnambool, Portland and Port Fairy. We got Port Fairy its public swimming pool and got funding for Stage 2 of South West TAFE's infrastructure project. We got Warrnambool's new courthouse built.

I left the region at the end of 2006 to live and work overseas, returning to Australia in 2009 to work in Melbourne, so I missed the 2010 State election down here.

Now that I'm back home, I feel that I have something to offer to get our region back into marginal territory.

This is largely about encouraging – enabling – people to think carefully about how they vote and why they vote a certain way and what it might take for them to change the way they vote, to make their vote count and to make it work towards our region becoming relevant to both parties by being marginal. People down here tend to vote blindly the way their parents did. I want them to think about it.

I want both major parties to be forced to think about how they represent and support our region. I want them to fight for our votes. I look at Geelong, Ballarat and Bendigo and what they get each budget and think 'why not the South West?' We need a strong voice for the South West that is listened to because both parties have to pay attention. I can help achieve that.



Mobilising voters to think about their vote and make the seat of South West Coast marginal again is at least part of Roy Reekie's motivation for running.

[dropcap style="color: #dc943c;"] Y [/dropcap] **ou said you were overseas. Where were you?**

I spent about five years in total in Scotland. I was working on addressing anti-social behaviour – neighbour disputes, vandalism, community issues, youth crime, family violence – of which there is a lot in Glasgow. I learnt a helluva lot doing that work, and living in that environment – about myself and about what makes communities tick. I came back with a new set of skills and a renewed enthusiasm for community and an admiration for the power of community-based action. I'm keen to apply those skills here now.

[dropcap style="color: #dc943c;"] W [/dropcap] **hat's your vision for the South West then?**

Having travelled in the UK and Europe – and lived recently in Melbourne, I can honestly say that the South West is a special place with unlimited potential. I can sense that it has changed, matured. It really has amazing potential – mainly in

food production, but also in renewable energy generation and tourism.

As a young person, I left Warrnambool to go to uni and to start my career. I returned to raise my children here and now they've all left for work and career advancement. Having been away and returned again, I've noticed that a lot of people my age are returning, like migrating whales.

My vision for the South West is that we have an economy, supported by social infrastructure (for health, education and transport), that makes it possible for our young people to either stay here for their education and careers or to return quicker. We need to keep our best and brightest connected to the South West and support them and welcome them when they return, and we need to provide those who prefer to stay with opportunities to advance their careers. This will help us to achieve our region's potential. I want to be part of that.

[dropcap style="color: #dc943c;"] W [/dropcap] **hat are your chances of winning?**

Let's be realistic – not good. But let's also have a red hot go at getting the seat as close as possible, and some fun in the process.

[button link="http://the-terrier.com.au/subscribe-2/" type="icon" icon="heart" newwindow="yes"] Did you enjoy this story? Please subscribe here to help Bluestone thrive.[/button]



You might also enjoy...

[Reekie to challenge Napthine for South West Coast](#)

[Community vision needs to extend city wide: Julie Eagles](#)

[Forget cover ups: roll right over Rolf](#)

[What is holding Portland back?](#)

[Flagstaff Hill at \\$15 million crossroad](#)

Reekie to challenge Napthine for South West Coast



Warrnambool lawyer Roy Reekie will line up against Denis Napthine for a third time at the next state

election.

COMMENT

[dropcap style="color: #8f9f59;"] A [/dropcap]fter months of speculation, Warrnambool lawyer **Roy Reekie** is poised to announce his preselection as the Labor challenger to Premier **Denis Naphine** for the seat of South West Coast.

Well-placed sources said Mr Reekie's pre-selection had been recently finalised by the Labor Party and an official announcement would be made shortly.

Ever since returning to live in Warrnambool last year, Mr Reekie has been one of the most promising prospects for Labor because of an already-established profile on the back of the 2002 state election. In that year, Mr Reekie came within a tantalising few hundred votes of pulling off the greatest upset that the south-west has ever seen.

Then, as now, his competitor was Dr Naphine, as it was again in 2006.

The election on November 29 will see the third showdown between the pair, but this time Mr Reekie faces an enormous task, despite the polls indicating that the Coalition will lose office.

While far from the safest Liberal seat in Victoria (that honor goes to leafy Malvern on a 20.5% swing) South West Coast requires an almost 12% swing for the seat to change hands and that is highly unlikely to happen.

What will happen, however, is a concerted push by Labor to carve into that bloated margin and, at the very least, drag it back into single digits so that the 2018 state election becomes a real contest.

And this can only be good for everybody, whether you vote

Labor, Liberal, Greens, Nationals or for the Palmer United Party.

Marginal seats are seats where things happen and things get done.

As I [wrote last August in the lead-up to the federal election](#), why would anybody wish to keep voting in the same party, year after year?

Such predictability makes politicians go soft in the mouth. They know they don't have to work too hard to actually deliver, because, heck, we just keep voting them back in anyway.

Judging by his extraordinary number of media appearances of late, there is no doubt Dr Naphine works very hard at his job, but the South West Coast is suffering.

Our major roads are terrible, our education standards are embarrassing, our tourism appeal is patchy (especially compared to what is happening at the *other* end of the Great Ocean Road), and our V-Line train service is one of the worst performing in the state.

We deserve better.

Mr Reekie, together with the Greens candidate **Thomas Campbell** and all of the other candidates yet to emerge, has his work cut out for him, but let's at least hope for a robust race.

We deserve that too.

[button link="http://the-terrier.com.au/subscribe-2/" type="icon" icon="heart" newwindow="yes"] Did you enjoy this story? Please subscribe here to help Bluestone thrive.[/button]



You might also enjoy...

[Trader levy heads for legal showdown](#)

[Community vision needs to extend city wide: Julie Eagles](#)

[Forget cover ups: roll right over Rolf](#)

[What is holding Portland back?](#)

[Flagstaff Hill at \\$15 million crossroad](#)