



STUART GRIMLEY MP

Member for Western Victoria
State Leader of Derryn Hinch's Justice Party



MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 5th July 2019

Roads Chewing into Rural Council Spending

Stuart Grimley, Member for Western Victoria has expressed his shock at the amount of money Councils across Western Victoria are having to inject into road maintenance.

Speaking to the Mayor and CEO of Pyrenees Shire last week, Mr Grimley was shocked to hear almost 48% of their total income had been spent fixing potholes and sealing cracked roads within the area.

Mr Grimley, who has spent much of his life in rural areas, understands the need to maintain and expand regional road networks, with smaller communities relying on them to get to and from work and to support valued industries.

The Pyrenees Shire, like other rural/regional Victorian councils, are able to apply to the State Government for funding under the \$100m *Fixing Country Roads Program*. Mr Grimley has pledged his support to Western Victoria Councils to support them in their respective bids for funding to ensure they can carry out vital road works without financial burden.

Tourism within the Pyrenees Shire generates an estimated \$28m to the local economy annually and Mr Grimley feels as though the Council is entitled receive additional funding in return for its contribution to State revenue.

This industry sustains 128 jobs and it indirectly supports other industry sectors such as construction, wine and food production, and retail, so is vital to the region.

As reported in the Herald Sun (01/07/2019), Pyrenees Shire residents pay approximately \$1500 each per year on road maintenance. Considering future possible rate capping reforms, Mr Grimley is conscious of funding arrangements between all levels of Government in sustaining proper road funding.

Mr Grimley is currently consulting with all Councils within Western Victoria and his constituency regarding impending amendments to the Local Government Act – including rate capping. If you would like to contribute to this discussion please contact stuart.grimley@parliament.vic.gov.au.

Quotes Attributable to Stuart Grimley MP:

“At this time of year, country roads really do start to fall apart but it’s still pretty shocking to me that a Council is having to spend 48% of its income on road maintenance when they should be spending income on upgrading parks, caring for its natural resources and investing in growing tourism.

Statistically speaking, potholes and cracks don’t account for a large percentage of the road toll but every life is important. It’s also still really important that rural road connectivity is built upon and maintained. I’ve visited many car accidents in my time as a Victoria Police officer and I can tell you; every one of them stays with you.

Many rural towns have large trucks running through not only A, but B and C class roads which should be looked at as they then require more frequent maintenance.

I will continue to work with the Pyrenees Shire and other rural councils to make sure Western Victoria gets its fair share of roads funding.”

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