

20 October 2021



**ELLEN
SANDELL MP**
STATE MP FOR MELBOURNE

The Hon. Daniel Andrews
Premier
By email: daniel.andrews@parliament.vic.gov.au

The Hon. Tim Pallas
Treasurer
Minister for Economic Development
By email: tim.pallas@parliament.vic.gov.au

The Hon. Martin Pakula
Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events
Minister for Industry Support and Recovery
By email: martin.pakula@parliament.vic.gov.au

The Hon. Danny Pearson
Assistant Treasurer
By email: danny.pearson@parliament.vic.gov.au

Re: Request for expanded CBD voucher system to aid our city's recovery

Dear Premier and Ministers,

The NSW Premier today has announced a new \$50 'Stay and Rediscover' voucher that can be used at accommodation, dining and entertainment venues across the state. This is on top of the new round of 'Dine and Discover' vouchers they have recently offered.

I would like to respectfully ask the Victorian Government to consider a similar program for inner city Melbourne to help our CBD recover, beyond the dining voucher program which I understand is already planned.

It's likely that Victorians will flock to the regions once lockdown is over, spending money on restaurants, venues and accommodation for much-needed holidays, weekend breaks, and visiting family and friends. But it's our inner city that has suffered the most economically from successive lockdowns, with the loss of CBD workers, international students, tourism, events, shows and festivals, and with metro Melbourne enduring a much harder and longer lockdown than most places in the world over both 2020 and 2021, and longer than regional Victoria.

I understand that a second dining voucher scheme is already planned in partnership with the City of Melbourne and that a Melbourne City Recovery Fund has also been announced, with details to be announced soon.

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In addition to these very welcome programs, I would like to suggest a voucher that can be redeemed at accommodation, entertainment venues, theatre, galleries and live performances in the CBD and immediate surrounds, accompanied by a marketing campaign to encourage people back to the CBD to experience all it has to offer, and build confidence for the businesses in this area.

This would send a signal that the CBD is ready to welcome people back in a safe way, and give a much-needed boost to workers and businesses in this important part of our state, especially our arts and live performance sector who are the cultural lifeblood of our city but have been especially hard hit.

The long-term recovery of the CBD will of course be driven by numerous factors and will need long-term investment. I ask that the Government consider both short-and-medium term programs such as vouchers and increased and consistent medium-term funding for the arts and festivals, as well as longer-term investments to ensure our CBD thrives into the future and remains the most liveable place in the world.

Thank you for your assistance with this important matter.

Kind Regards,



Ellen Sandell
State MP for Melbourne