

# ACCESSIBLE AUSTRALIA

## The Australian Greens plan for a more inclusive Australia

There are more than four million disabled people in Australia. Just like everyone else, they have a right to be supported to live full and active lives.

But significant barriers still remain in our society. Disabled people continue to fall through the cracks and are often denied the same rights as everyone else.

Successive Liberal and Labor governments have perpetuated the discrimination of disabled people, often denying them access to inclusive education, meaningful employment, adequate services, and the support they need.

The Greens will remove the barriers that stop disabled people from living a good life, fix the systems that are meant to support them, and eliminate the structural discrimination they face.

### THE GREENS WILL:

- ▲ **Fully resource the NDIS** so it meets the needs of disabled people, their families and carers
- ▲ **Make disabled people's physical and digital worlds accessible**, including by establishing a new \$3 billion Accessible Infrastructure Fund
- ▲ **Champion inclusive education and employment** by establishing a 20 per cent quota for full disabled employee representation in the Australian Public Service by 2030
- ▲ **Create more accessible housing and healthcare** through co-designed planning, policies, and implementation of Liveable Housing Australia Silver Standard across the country
- ▲ **Ensure disabled people are at the centre of decision-making, policy and planning** through a \$30 million increase in Commonwealth funding for disability advocacy organisations over four years

## PAYING FOR OUR PLAN

By making billionaires and big corporations pay their fair share of tax and winding back handouts to big polluters, we can build a better life for all of us.

One in three big corporations pays no tax, and many big corporations and billionaires send their profits offshore tax-free.

The Greens will tax billionaires with a new 'billionaires tax', require big corporations making excessive profits to pay a 'corporate super-profits tax', and axe billions of dollars in handouts to the coal, oil and gas giants that are driving the climate crisis.

These measures have all been costed by the independent Parliamentary Budget Office.

When big corporations and billionaires pay their fair share, everyone can have the services they need for a better life.

## An NDIS that works

The NDIS has the potential to transform the lives of disabled people, their families and carers. But to transform lives, the scheme needs to work, deliver on its promises, and meet the needs of people.

The Greens are committed to creating a properly funded, staffed and resourced NDIS that is transparent, consultative and accountable.

The Greens will:

- Remove the staffing cap and ensure that staff receive high-quality, ongoing training and support;
- Ensure the IT systems and interfaces for participants and service providers are fit for purpose and fully accessible;
- Ensure the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission is properly resourced to undertake its compliance and

investigative capacity through an immediate investment of \$300 million;

- Push to remove the age limit that prevents people over 65 from being accepted in the NDIS;
- Boost NDIS funding and reinvest into the NDIS the \$160 million the Morrison Government committed to corporations as part of their failed attempt to roll out Independent Assessments.

## Accessible transport, infrastructure and communications

The Greens will:

- Invest \$1 billion over four years to boost accessible public transport across Australia;
- Establish a new \$3 billion Accessible Infrastructure Fund, including \$30 million Accessible Nature Fund,

available to state, territory and local governments to improve the accessibility of existing public places and infrastructure. This includes increasing access to nature and tourism activities for disabled people;

- Restore funding and invest \$30 million to increase the availability of AUSLAN interpreters, relay and translation services, and expand the regulatory requirement for audio description and captioning services to commercial TV;
- Provide \$1.49 million over two years, followed by ongoing annual funding of \$2 million indexed by the Consumer Price Index, to establish a National Disability Telecommunications Service, a national resource for communications product and services information, training and support;
- Invest an initial \$5 million to re-establish a safe, dedicated online platform for the promotion of discussion, debate, and cultural development within the disability community (similar to the ABC's defunded Ramp Up).

## Inclusive education and employment

Disabled Australians have the right to a good education and meaningful employment. We know that disabled people experience poverty at a higher rate than the rest of the population, and have poorer employment outcomes due to a range of social barriers and discrimination.<sup>1</sup> We need a plan to address this so that disabled people can have the things they need to live a good life.

<sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia, 2018  
<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/disability/disability-ageing-and-carers-australia-summary-findings/latest-release>

Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities makes clear that disabled people have a right to inclusive education. It is time we make a serious plan to ensure disabled students in Australia can realise this right, by committing to a goal of eliminating segregated education by 2030.<sup>2</sup>

The Greens will:

- Work with the disability community to create a National Jobs Plan that:
  - Sets a 20 per cent quota for full employment representation of disabled employees in the Australian Public Service by 2030;
  - Sets milestone targets, performance indicators and timeframes for increasing the workforce participation and retention for disabled people across all sectors;
  - Ends segregated employment, including the closure of Australian Disability Enterprises (ADE), and makes transitional arrangements for workers.
- Transition to a fully inclusive education system by:
  - Investing an initial \$10 million over four years to co-design a National Inclusive Education Transition Plan with disabled people, families, disability representative organisations,

<sup>2</sup> This timeline is in line with the Australian Coalition for Inclusive Education's Driving change: A roadmap for achieving inclusive education in Australia  
<https://acie.org.au/2020/09/30/driving-change-a-roadmap-for-achieving-inclusive-education-in-australia/>

teachers and their unions, and education experts;

- o Building inclusive education into tertiary qualifications and giving all pre-service and in-service teachers and principals the opportunity to train, retrain and regularly upskill in inclusive education practices by investing \$400 million over four years.

## Accessible housing

Housing is a fundamental human right.<sup>3</sup> Disabled people have been locked out of affordable and accessible housing, leaving them with unacceptable options.<sup>4</sup>

The Greens will:

- Ensure the implementation of the Liveable Housing Australia (LHA) Silver standard now codified in the National Construction Code across all jurisdictions;<sup>5</sup>
- Build one million fully accessible public and community homes under the Federal Housing Trust;
- Invest in accessible housing solutions to ensure availability of high quality Specialist Disability Accommodation and transitional housing options to

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<sup>3</sup> Article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) promotes and protects the right of disabled people to live independently in the community; Article 25 of the CRPD reobnigises the right to high standard of health without discrimination.

<sup>4</sup> The University of Melbourne, Why housing is a major public health issue for people with disability <https://pursuit.unimelb.edu.au/articles/why-housing-is-a-major-public-health-issue-for-australians-with-disability>

<sup>5</sup> Building Minister' Meeting: Communique April 2021 <https://www.industry.gov.au/news/building-ministers-meeting-communique-april-2021>

ensure disabled people aren't forced into residential aged care;<sup>6</sup>

## Disabled people in the legal system

Disabled people are overrepresented in the criminal legal system in Australia, and this is even more so for disabled First Nations peoples.<sup>7</sup> We must urgently address this crisis through community-led solutions, and undo the racism and ableism that have led us here.

The Greens will:

- Work with communities to co-design justice reinvestment and diversionary programs to reduce the interaction disabled people have with the criminal legal system;
- Ensure that disabled people in the criminal legal system, particularly in carceral settings, are able to access disability supports and reasonable adjustments and modifications, including the NDIS. This includes the support in the lead up to any court proceedings and during the court proceedings themselves. This will have the effect of ensuring that disabled people are provided all the necessary supports to be able to meaningfully participate throughout the entire process of their legal proceedings;
- Ensure that disabled people interacting with the legal system are provided with

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<sup>6</sup> Summer Foundation Housing Policy <https://www.summerfoundation.org.au/policy-information-and-resources/housing-policy/#solution1>

<sup>7</sup> Eileen Baldry et al, 'It's just a big vicious cycle that swallows them up': Indigenous people with mental and cognitive disabilities in the criminal justice system' (2016) 8(22) Indigenous Law Bulletin 10.

appropriate support, including advocacy and legal support;

- Ensure that all Australian jurisdictions that allow people to be imprisoned after a finding of unfitness to plead or to stand trial, or by verdict of not guilty due to impairment, impose effective limits on the total period of imprisonment that a person can be subject to.

## Empowering our community

For too long, disabled people have been shut out of decision-making and policy creation affecting the community. This has perpetuated discrimination, violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation, and has seen devastating consequences.

The 2019/20 bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic are two catastrophic events that placed disabled people at extreme risk. We saw the Coalition government consistently fail to meaningfully respond to this, and to co-design inclusive and accessible solutions.

The Greens will always ensure that the disability community are not only included in but empowered to lead in policy, planning, and implementation.

The Greens will:

- Increase Commonwealth funding for disability advocacy organisations by \$30 million over four years;
- Implement all recommendations of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability Public Report on the

Experiences of People with Disability During the Ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic;<sup>8</sup>

- Invest \$15 million over the forward estimates to ensure our emergency responders and disaster relief services receive disability awareness training;
- Establish an Office of Disability Strategy within the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, responsible for coordinating and monitoring progress of the National Disability Strategy.

## HOW THE GREENS HAVE BEEN FIGHTING FOR YOU

**In the last parliament, it was The Greens who:**

- ▲ Successfully campaigned for a Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation of People with Disability;
- ▲ Legislated changes to the Royal Commission's Act to strengthen protections for people seeking to give confidential evidence to the Disability Royal Commission;
- ▲ Worked alongside the community to defeat the Morrison government's plans to implement Independent Assessments in to the NDIS;
- ▲ Campaigned to have audio description requirements legislated;
- ▲ Secured support for Australia's Thalidomide survivors.

<sup>8</sup> Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability public hearing 5 report *Experiences of people with disability during the ongoing COVID-19*

<https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/system/files/2020-11/Report%20-%20Public%20hearing%205%20-%20Experiences%20of%20people%20with%20disability%20during%20the%20ongoing%20COVID-19%20pandemic.pdf>