

BETTER BUSINESS SUPPORT

ENLIVENING CANBERRA'S ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

Businesses play essential roles in the lives of Canberrans – providing products, services and employment.

As our city grows, Canberra will need more high-quality jobs in the public, private and community sectors, and the ACT Greens support the diversification of the economy, particularly in fields that support progress toward net-zero emissions.

Right now, we know that dealing with Government isn't always as easy as it should be – forms require collection of needless data and decisions are made too slowly.

The ACT Greens will work to make dealing with Government as simple and quick as possible, provide active support for alternative business models, particularly co-operatives, and we'll expand the City Renewal Authority's remit so that it is also responsible for delivering an exciting and diverse nightlife as well as activating the city by day.

THE ACT GREENS WILL:

- ▲ Offer payroll tax concessions to promote cooperative business models
- ▲ Appoint a Nightlife Commissioner to further develop Canberra's nighttime economy
- ▲ Halve liquor licencing fees for pokies-free venues
- ▲ Support a new Convention Centre for Canberra
- ▲ Include video game production in the Screen Location Incentive Scheme
- ▲ Double funding for the Canberra Small Business Support Program
- ▲ Simplify business interactions with the government.

SUPPORT ALTERNATIVE BUSINESS MODELS

PAYROLL TAX CONCESSIONS TO ENCOURAGE CO-OPS AND WORKER REPRESENTATION

Success has many makers, and we want to encourage co-operative business models that support community or employee ownership.

The Greens will task the ACT Government's Business and Innovation small business team with developing policy to better support the establishment and development of co-operatives, working closely with the Canberra Small Business Advice and Support Service, and Access Canberra, to ensure advice and support is rolled out to businesses.

The Greens will require worker and consumer representation on the board of every ACT territory owned corporation or Government business.

We will investigate mechanisms to support workers to transition into co-operative ownership of a business.

We will incentivise businesses to adopt a cooperative model by providing a payroll tax concession to cooperatives, by doubling their payroll tax threshold to \$4,000,000.

WHAT'S THE INVESTMENT?

- Payroll tax concessions amounting up to \$137,000 per business, which takes account of the full concession
- This incentive will likely generate economic activity which would otherwise have not taken place, as well as delivering increased welfare for workers and the community
- Other elements to be delivered within existing resources.

ENHANCE CREATIVE & NIGHTTIME ECONOMIES

A NIGHTLIFE COMMISSIONER

The Nightlife Commissioner will be a part time role to champion Canberra's nighttime economy – and likely a local luminary from the sector. They'll work with businesses to understand how to effectively support the growth of a range of nighttime options and provide recommendations to Government.

This position will help support the development of jobs and ensure Canberra becomes known as a place with great nightlife.

CUT LIQUOR LICENCING FEES

We'll expand the remit of the City Renewal Authority (CRA), and working with the newly created Nightlife

Commissioner, make the CRA responsible for nighttime activation.

This could include encouraging venues to come together to deliver laneway parties, performers or other city centre activations, creating more occasions to enjoy the city at night.

The Greens will provide CRA with event seed funding of \$250,000 to trial small scale events and engaging nighttime activations, and collect simple, real time data to measure impact on city footfall, spend and visitor profile. This will showcase the role of Nightlife Commissioner and allow the community to provide real time feedback on Canberra's nightlife.

We will also halve liquor licence fees for pokies-free venues with capacity of 375 patrons and below. This will help make Canberra a better year-round destination for great nightlife, all while supporting our local businesses and artists.

A NEW CONVENTION CENTRE

Canberra means 'meeting place', but our city lacks a convention centre to allow the scale of meetings that should take place in our nation's capital. Smaller cities than Canberra, such as Cairns and Wellington, have larger convention centres and event capacity.

A new convention centre will allow for a greater diversity of conventions and meetings to take place, bringing investment, jobs and opportunity to Canberra.

A new convention centre would also provide opportunities to showcase Canberra to more of the nation and the world, welcoming people who will visit, enjoy our Bush Capital, and provide support for local businesses.

The Economic Development Directorate is currently working on plans for a new Convention Centre with 50:50 funding from the Commonwealth. We expect that these plans, once released, will inform options for the development of the Convention Centre sympathetic to Civic's current design.

EXPAND SCREEN PRODUCTION INCENTIVES TO THE VIDEO GAME INDUSTRY

Building on the success of shows like Austin, Total Control, Secret City and even blockbusters like the Liam Neeson thriller Blacklight, the Greens will continue work to attract screen productions to the ACT.

We will bolster the local video games industry and provide new career pathways for coders and designers by allowing computer games production to be eligible for the Screen Location Incentive Scheme.

WHAT'S THE INVESTMENT?

- \$200,000 over four years to employ the Nightlife Commissioner, taking into account the part-time nature of this role.
- \$250,000 for CRA event funding.

BETTER BUSINESS SUPPORT | P3

Authorised by Pat Dollard for the ACT Greens

- The Screen Location Incentive Scheme is already funded. We will change the guidelines so computer games production are also be eligible.

SIMPLIFY INTERACTIONS WITH GOVERNMENT

MODERNISE ACCESS CANBERRA

We know businesses are short on time, and the Greens believe that dealing with the government should be as simple as possible.

The ACT Government needs to consider how it implements regulations so that they are customer focused, collect only data that is needed, and make decisions quickly.

We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring business satisfaction data with Access Canberra is regularly sought, monitored and acted upon;
- Implementing our initiative for Transformative, Open and Effective Public Service, to help foster a culture of accountability in the public service – which allows public servants to take decisions in the interests of customers and quickly correct mistakes;

- Ensure that the Better Regulation Taskforce focuses on businesses' experiences of regulatory enforcement and, together with the government's Digital teams, works with Access Canberra to update processes so they are as simple as possible.

RECRUITING THE RIGHT SKILLS

Recruiting the right skills can be hard, particularly in fast-growing and knowledge-intensive industries. We will work with the federal Government to unblock bureaucracy preventing visa holders and permanent residents from gaining security clearance.

MORE SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT

The ACT Greens will double funding to support small business through the Canberra Small Business Advice and Support Service.

We'll provide \$300,000 per year, up from \$150,000, and continue to grow and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned enterprises through the ACT Government's *Badji* program.

This will include:

- Working proactively with small businesses to offer support in a format that suits them and their hours. This could include one-to-one advice, webinars on common issues and concerns, and proactive engagement with businesses that are struggling.

- Assistance with transforming to alternative business models, especially co-operatives
- Providing high-level financial advice and support to businesses
- Providing support on digital marketing and digitisation of business
- Signposting and providing referrals to specialist advice, such as for mental health.

WHAT'S THE INVESTMENT?

- An additional \$600,000 over four years to double the Small Business Advice and Support Service
- Access Canberra modernisation to be delivered within existing resources.