

MP Engagement Working Group

DCAN's MP Engagement Working Group recently held meetings in April with local **Federal MP, Ged Kearney**, and **State MPs, Nathan Lambert** for Preston and **Kat Theophanous** for Northcote.

With Ged Kearney we advocated strongly for a **25% tax on fossil fuel exports** and **removing diesel subsidies to fossil fuel companies**. While neither of these initiatives got up in the budget, solid groundwork has been laid for changes to future budgets. The groundswell of community support for a tax on gas exports, for example, now appears unstoppable.

We also argued more broadly for an **overhaul of the whole tax system** to reduce inequality and intergenerational inequity – some of which was addressed in the federal budget, with so much more to do.

We alerted Ged to an important international conference in Santa Marta which has initiated the all-important work of developing a **roadmap to phase out fossil fuels**. This is something that international conferences have so far failed to address. We also raised the importance of **stopping deforestation**, and for Australia to play a strong role in international efforts to end it.

In late April, several DCAN members met with our State MPs Kat Theophanous and Nathan Lambert. Below are some of the many issues we covered and their responses.

We asked them to seek to have Victorian legislation brought in, similar to existing NSW legislation, to **prohibit fracking and drilling for gas within Victorian coastal waters**. Nathan agreed to follow up on this.

We noted the importance of **intact forests** in local cooling, moderating extreme weather and drawing moisture inland. Nathan undertook to follow-up with the new Environment Minister on the rehydration role of forests and the importance of putting out fires fast.

We voiced our disappointment that the Government's response to the Climate Resilience Inquiry **does not commit to more funding to prepare for climate impacts and disasters**. In response to the argument that much climate resilience work is actually being done across several ministries, we argued for a **clearer allocation and clearer reporting**.

We queried the planning principles being used for the **new Activity Centres**, such as the one in Thornbury, noting the **lack of consideration of climate resilience** - including increased flood risks, and reductions in street tree cover and vegetation leading to increased heat island issues, and reduced biodiversity and walkability. We asked our MPs to **request relevant Ministers to review these planning rules to properly consider climate resilience**. Kat said she would take this on notice.

Regarding electrification for apartment-dwellers, we asked our MPs to encourage the government to **provide incentives to owners' corporations to provide power points in every car parking space in existing apartments, and to legislate for chargers for each car space in new apartments**. Kat undertook to follow up with the relevant Minister.

As is our usual practice we will be **following up all the issues we raised with the MPs**. If you would like to know more about these meetings and/or join future meetings please drop us an email at darebincan@gmail.com