

September 2026 Newsletter



**OUT DOORKNOCKING WITH
VOLUNTEERS IN WEMBLEY**

Hello Curtin!

September has been dominated by one question: are we ready for the rapid acceleration of AI? The world's leading tech companies have told us we're not. The industry is urging a slowdown – tech leaders are asking to be regulated because some AI capabilities are progressing faster than our ability to understand and control them. When the people building this technology say it is advancing too quickly, governments need to act. I called on the Australian Government to properly fund our **AI Safety Institute**, currently running on less than \$8 million a year while the UK's equivalent gets sixteen times that amount. I've also been calling for **mandatory incident reporting** – which seems more necessary than ever in light of the Medicare AI breach.

I also introduced legislation this month to prevent **automated decision-making** systems from causing the kind of harm we saw with Robodebt. I have raised the issue in Parliament repeatedly and the Government appears to have (partially) listened, at least in relation to aged care. This month a bill was introduced by Government to provide an opportunity for human override of automated decision about aged care support.

The Treasurer's triennial **Intergenerational Report** was released a couple of weeks ago. I welcome the focus on long-term thinking in the report (beyond the three-year election cycle). The report details the generational inequality faced by today's young people, but fails to adequately address challenges such as climate change, mental health and social cohesion. And while AI was flagged as a necessary driver of future productivity, it will only work for us if we get the policy settings right. Harnessing the benefits and safeguarding the risks of AI is essential.

I also joined crossbench colleagues to call out Labor's use of grants for pre-election pork barrelling. A new report from [The Centre for Public Integrity](#) shows that like the previous government, the ALP government disproportionately allocated taxpayer-funded grants to electorates they were trying to win or hold. I have long called for an **enforceable, statutory framework** that ensures grants are delivered on merit and need, with transparency and accountability – not to buy votes. The Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles recommend the use of competitive, merit-based selection processes. But these rules have been ignored, and the Government should explain why to Australians.

I was disappointed that the Government **quietly abandoned** its promised national plastic packaging standards this month. The Government has walked away from establishing an EPRS scheme, when in a rare moment of unity, industry, businesses, environmental groups and the community all agreed it was needed and now was the time to do it. Read more below.

The Government also released its long-awaited **Digital Duty of Care draft legislation**. The reforms offer real progress for protecting kids from online harm, but could go further to protect all Australians (more on that below).

Migration was back in the spotlight too, with both the Government and One Nation announcing their approach to visa approvals. I've spent recent months meeting with migration researchers and experts to properly understand where the system is failing, and I'll be progressing my **migration policy** with community input, including through an event on Monday 2 November.

Best wishes, and thanks for reading,
Kate

In Curtin

Idle Off: protecting kids from exhaust fumes



**WITH TOWN OF MOSMAN PARK MAYOR PAUL SHAW,
DR RACHEL HORNCastle & STUDENT LEADERS**

Did you know one minute of a car idling emits enough pollution to fill 150 balloons?

I visited Mosman Park Primary School this month, where students are leading the way on the "Idle Off" campaign. The initiative raises awareness of the small behavioural changes that can have big impacts on health. Switching off your engine while waiting at school pick-up is a simple act that protects kids, saves fuel and helps the environment.

I'd love to see more schools across Curtin follow Mosman Park Primary's lead.

Wins for veterans and private health insurance holders



**HEARING ABOUT THE IMPORTANT SUPPORT
'OUR VETERANS FORGE' PROVIDES TO VETERANS AT
THE HOUSE, CAMPBELL BARRACKS**

Some good news this month: the Government backtracked on its proposed **\$5,000 cap on veterans' allied health care**. I'd heard directly from veterans in Curtin about how damaging this cap would be, and I spoke about it in Parliament, linked [here](#). This is a welcome result.

I also seconded Monique Ryan's amendments to a **private health insurance bill**, some of which the Government has now agreed to. These changes strengthen the accuracy of information insurers publish about medical fees. Small wins like these matter to many people in Curtin and across the country.

Volunteer Grants Awarded (2025-26 round)



**WITH VOLUNTEER GRANTS RECIPIENT,
SHORT BACK & SIDEWALKS
IN SUBIACO**

Twenty-three organisations in Curtin have been awarded a total of \$66,665 in the last round of (merit-based and competitive) federal volunteer grants, delivered by the Department of Social Services.

I recently visited volunteer grants recipient, Short Back & Sidewalks at their outreach program at The Third Place in Subiaco. Short Back & Sidewalks provides haircuts free of cost and free of judgement, delivered by volunteer hairdressers and barbers in safe and welcoming community settings. It was wonderful to see their work firsthand and how the funding will assist volunteers within the organisation.

I congratulate all grant recipients and look forward to seeing each group use this funding to support and celebrate your volunteers.

**Stronger Communities Programme -
now open!**

My office is now accepting Expressions of Interest (EOIs) for the next round of the Stronger Communities Grants Programme. This program funds small infrastructure projects that deliver social benefits for local communities.

Grants between \$2,500 and \$20,000 are available to community organisations and local councils. Submit your EOI to kate.chaney.mp@aph.gov.au by **22 October 2026**.

Irwin Barracks - make a submission

I'm encouraging **Curtin residents to put forward their ideas** for a redeveloped Irwin Barrack site by making a submission to the [Department of Finance](#).

This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity, and I want to see the community's interests at the centre of planning decisions for this land.

In Canberra

A win on aged care, but a legislated framework still needed



ASKING THE ATTORNEY GENERAL IN QUESTION TIME ABOUT PROGRESS TOWARDS A LEGISLATED ADM FRAMEWORK

There was a genuine win in aged care this month: the Government introduced a bill to provide an opportunity for a **human to override automated decisions** about aged care packages. It's overdue, and something I've raised repeatedly, so I'm glad to see it. But it only fixes one program.

I also introduced my own Private Member's Bill to establish Australia's first legislated, **mandatory framework for automated decision-making** (ADM) across the whole of government.

In July 2023, the Robodebt Royal Commission found the automated debt recovery scheme was unlawful and recommended exactly this kind of framework, and more than two years on, it still doesn't exist. For the best part of a year, an algorithm had the final say on aged care funding with no human able to override wrong decisions. While that will now be addressed in aged care, the broader issue remains.

The Attorney-General tells me her department is working on a broader framework and I'll be comparing the Government approach to my Bill, which sets one standard for the whole of government: transparency about where ADM is used, mandatory human oversight and override for high-risk decisions, and a fast, genuine right to review.

More than **80 per cent** of the **760 Curtin people** I surveyed are uncomfortable with government using automated systems to make decisions about them, and nearly 80 per cent want legislated, mandatory rules.

Proper funding for our AI Safety Institute



CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT TO INCREASE FUNDING FOR AUSTRALIA'S AI SAFETY INSTITUTE

Following a remarkable week in which the leaders of Anthropic, OpenAI, Google DeepMind and xAI all publicly agreed that AI's risks are becoming genuinely hard to control, I called on the Government to urgently and substantially **increase funding for Australia's AI Safety Institute (AISI)**.

This is our frontline defence against catastrophic risks, from cyber-security and bioweapons to supercharged disinformation and AI agents escaping human control, yet it's allocated less than \$8 million a year. That's woefully inadequate. The UK's equivalent safety institute, recognised as the international gold standard, gets sixteen times more funding.

I'm calling on the Government **to lift AISI funding to \$100 million a year** — a modest sum against the Federal Budget, and small change next to the size of the opportunity and risk AI presents in Australia.

Australia's protection from AI risks can't rely on overseas companies and foreign presidents. We don't get to opt out of the consequences if something goes wrong.

A great start on Digital Duty of Care



SPEAKING IN PARLIAMENT ON DIGITAL DUTY OF CARE

The Government's long-awaited Digital Duty of Care exposure draft makes a start addressing the deep concern across Australia about the impact of social media and other digital platforms on daily life.

People in Curtin are concerned that our online spaces are increasingly polluted by **AI slop, misogyny, scams, misinformation, hate and outrage**.

There's a lot to like in the draft bill, particularly the **strong, overarching duty for children** that covers design features and negative behavioural impacts, not just content. It will be important that the Parliament works together to get a version of this across the line, to meet the concerns of so many Australians.

There are **some areas that could be stronger**. For adults, the draft only addresses material that's already illegal or restricted under existing industry codes. It doesn't touch addictive design, content monetisation or

advertising systems — the features actually driving a lot of the harm.

Giving **adults an opt out option** for algorithms is the bare minimum. A similar approach has been ineffective in the EU because the platforms are incentivised to make the opt-out as unappealing as possible. Penalties, capped around \$100 million, may not be enough to change billion-dollar companies' behaviour, and there's far too much left to Ministerial discretion.

I have a strong view that claims that this legislation is an attack on free speech miss the point. Ministerial discretion could be tightened up, but this isn't about controlling what you see online — it's about **reducing the power tech companies already have to control your feed** for their profit.

Based on consultation with experts, industry, civil society and more than **1,200 Curtin constituents (90 per cent of whom think platforms should be responsible for the harms they cause)**, I'll be pushing hard for improvements (and compromises) to get this done.

You can listen to my recent speech in Parliament on this issue linked [here](#).

Pushing for plastic packaging reform



Three years after Environment Ministers committed to national packaging reform, the Government has now **quietly abandoned its promise** of mandatory national packaging standards.

This month I spoke at two press conferences alongside industry representatives, calling on the Environment Minister to come good on the Government's promise to establish an Extended Producer Responsibility Scheme to deal with Australia's plastic packaging problem.

This was a rare moment where industry, environmental groups and the community all wanted the same thing, and it's deeply disappointing to see it let slip, particularly as Recycling Plastics Australia entered administration around the same time, putting jobs and years of investment at risk.

You can read the policy paper, *The Plastic Problem*, Dr Sophie Scamps MP and I published in July [here](#).

Tune in!

This month I spoke with Sally Sara on **ABC Radio National Breakfast** about Automated Decision-Making and the Digital Duty of Care: [LISTEN HERE](#)

I also recorded two podcasts about the digital duty of care -

Democracy Sausage with Mark Kenny: [LISTEN HERE](#)

Burning Platforms - Making Sausages with Kate Chaney: [LISTEN HERE](#)

Get involved!

Get your entry in for the 2027 Curtin Calendar!



**CALL OUT FOR
2027 CALENDAR SUBMISSIONS**

Local artists and photographers — if you've taken a picture or created an artwork of something you love in Curtin that you want to share, please submit it!

Our annual calendar is distributed freely to constituents and showcases photos and artwork by our community members of the places that we call home.

Social Media

Don't forget to **follow me on social media**. It's the best way to **keep up-to-date** and find out about **my upcoming events!**



Contact Us

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We acknowledge the Whadjuk Noongar People as the Traditional Custodians of this land and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

Authorised by Kate Chaney MP, Cnr The Boulevard and Floreat Ave, Floreat WA 6014

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**AUGUST COMMUNITY FORUM
AT ST BRIGID BAR**

Come along to share your thoughts and hear about what I've been working on in Canberra and in Curtin.

Tuesday 6 October

5:30 pm – 6:30 pm

Subiaco Bar & Bistro

Subiaco Village Shopping Centre, 10/531 Hay Street, Subiaco

Tuesday 10 November

5:30 pm – 6:30 pm

The Morris

2 Morris Road, Innaloo

Tuesday 8 December - Christmas Catch-up

5:30 pm – 6:30 pm

Matilda Bay Foreshore (near the gazebo)

Drinks and nibbles provided.

To RSVP for all events, visit the Events page of my website [here](#).

Grant Writing Workshop

Wednesday 11 November

6:00 pm – 8:30 pm

The Boulevard Centre

99 The Boulevard, Floreat

Back by popular demand! Join me to learn tips and tricks to find grants for your community organisation and write winning applications. The workshop is run by Keith Whelan from *The Grants Guy*, who we bring over to Perth for the event.

This is a free ticketed event but registration is essential. Sign up [here](#).