



# HOLT HERALD

## Christmas Edition

We are facing challenging times, and the Labor Government is committed to being a part of the solution. In the face of unpredictable global events, we are dedicated to alleviating cost of living pressures for everyday Australians without adding to inflation.

The Albanese Labor Government is steadfast in its mission to bring relief to Australian families. We are achieving this through a series of initiatives, including Cheaper Childcare, More Affordable Medicines, strengthened Paid Parental Leave, Energy Bill Relief, and Fee-Free TAFE.

We're also investing record amounts into Medicare and Bulk Billing, ensuring that quality healthcare remains accessible to all.

In our efforts to address housing affordability and fairness, we are building new homes, investing in affordable housing, and making

renting fairer for everyone. Fixing our migration system is another top priority, with reviews into the exploitation of Australia's visa system, and into its suitability to meet Australia's future needs now completed.

Despite the challenging times, we are committed to managing the economy and creating job opportunities for Australians. We will continue to work tirelessly for Australia, especially as we approach this festive time of the year.

**From my family to yours, I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**

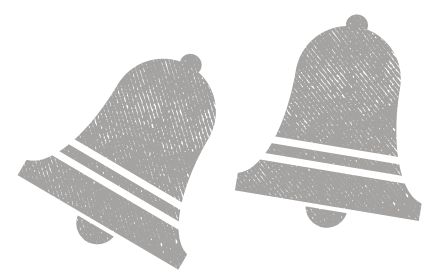
Warm regards,

*Cassandra Fernando*

Cassandra Fernando MP  
Federal Member for Holt

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**Cassandra Fernando MP**  
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# Largest

## EXPANSION OF BULK BILLING

On 1 November, the largest investment in bulk billing in the 40-year history of Medicare took effect with the tripling of the bulk billing incentive for local GPs.

Bulk billing is the beating heart of Medicare. This historic investment means it will be easier for 34,209 children and their families and 56,208 pensioners and concession cardholders in Holt to see a bulk-billed GP.

On top of our investment in bulk billing, we are investing in a \$1.5 billion indexation boost across the board to Medicare rebates, increasing the amount that doctors receive for Medicare services and reducing pressure on GPs.



*We will always continue to strengthen Medicare.*

## SKILLING THE NATION

The Albanese Government has struck a landmark agreement with State and Territory Governments, unlocking billions for the skills Australia needs. This will kickstart real improvements in Vocational Education and Training (VET), creating new opportunities. Major reforms will include the establishment of nationally networked TAFE Centres of Excellence involving partnerships between TAFEs, universities, and industry.

The Albanese Government is prepared to invest \$12.6 billion to expand and transform access to the VET sector, support quality training and implement reforms to address critical skills needs. This new investment is on top of \$414 million already committed for the delivery of 300,000 Fee-Free TAFE places from 2024.





# Minister Anne Aly

## VISITS PEBBLE PATCH ELC

I had the pleasure of hosting my good friend the Hon Dr Anne Aly MP, Minister for Youth and Early Childhood Education at Pebble Patch Early Learning Centre.

It was amazing to meet all the staff at the centre and talk about how Labor's Cheaper Child Care will benefit over 7,100 families in Holt. The changes will cut costs by about \$1,700 a year for the average family on \$120,000 and who have a child in care three days a week.



## Holt Family Fun Day

Thank you to everyone who came to Holt Family Fun Days in suburbs across my electorate. Families, friends, and neighbours gathered to enjoy a day filled with fun and sunshine. It was a fantastic opportunity for the community to come together and strengthen our bonds.





# Funding

## SCHOOL UPGRADES ACROSS HOLT



I am excited to announce that our community has secured \$125,000 in funding from the Schools Upgrade Fund. A big thank you to the work of the Minister for Education, the Hon Jason Clare MP.

This funding will go towards supporting the growth and development of our educational institutions, including:

- **\$25,000 for Cranbourne Carlisle Primary School to build new STEM learning spaces**
- **\$25,000 for Cranbourne Park Primary School to refurbish classrooms**
- **\$25,000 for Cranbourne West Primary School to install shade structures**
- **\$25,000 for Devon Meadows Primary School to upgrade IT equipment**
- **\$25,000 for Lyndhurst Primary to refurbish classrooms**

Applications are now open for Round 2 of the Schools Upgrade Fund. Round 2 of the Fund will provide \$215.8 million for capital works of \$250,000 or more in government schools. Applications close on Thursday 29 February 2024.



### How's your mobile coverage?

In today's world, good mobile connectivity is not a luxury – it is an essential need. And I know our community can be serviced better by telecommunication providers. That's why I'm conducting a local Mobile Coverage Survey.

To have your say, please scan the QR code below and complete the survey.



# Strengthening THE AUSTRALIA- INDIA RELATIONSHIP

I recently had the privilege of representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator the Hon Penny Wong, at the Australia India Youth Dialogue (AIYD)—an enriching experience that fosters meaningful connections and collaboration between the best and brightest young minds from Australia and India.

As part of my visit to India, I was blessed to visit several holy sites, including BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham and Gurdwara Bangla Sahib in New Delhi, and St Mary's Basilica in Bengaluru. In addition, I paid homage to Mahatma Gandhi at his memorial Raj Ghat and addressed the students at Christ University, Bengaluru.



# Expanded

## PAID PARENTAL LEAVE



From 1 July 2024, Paid Parental Leave will increase by two weeks each year until reaching 26 weeks in July 2026.

Four weeks will be reserved for each parent to encourage shared care. We will also introduce more concurrent leave – meaning parents can take up to four weeks of leave at the same time if they choose to, providing flexibility to families in how they arrange their care.

The Albanese Labor Government's changes reflect the largest investment in Paid Parental Leave since the scheme was introduced in 2011. This \$1.2 billion investment will deliver more support for working families, improve outcomes for children and advance gender equality.





# **STRONGER COMMUNITIES**

## **AND HOLT VOLUNTEER GRANTS**

In the past year I am proud to have awarded organisations in our community \$216,225 through the Stronger Communities Programme and Holt Volunteers Grants, which fund small capital projects and support the work of volunteers, respectively. Congratulations to the following organisations on being successful:

**1st Devon Meadows Scout Group**  
**AusLanka TV**  
**Backpacks 4 VIC Kids**  
**Bakhtar Community Organisation**  
**Blind Bight Community Centre**  
**Carlisle Park Vikings Cricket Club**  
**Casey Netball Association**  
**Casey United Soccer Club**  
**Clyde Football Club**  
**Clyde Scout Group**  
**COOK4CALD**  
**Cranbourne Bowling Club**  
**Cranbourne Football Netball Club**  
**Cranbourne Italian Senior Citizens Club**  
**Devon Meadows Cricket Club**  
**Devon Meadows Fire Brigade - CFA**  
**Hampton Park Cricket Club**  
**Hampton Park United Sparrows FC**  
**Hampton Park Uniting Church**  
**Knox City Mavericks**

**Malayalee Association of Victoria**  
**Melbourne Afghan Soccer Association**  
**Melbourne Association of Tamil Students**  
**Melbourne Sixers Sports Club**  
**Multicultural Youth Support Service**  
**Nanaksar Thath**  
**Narre South Saints Football Netball Club**  
**Narre Warren Fire Brigade - CFA**  
**Pickleball Victoria**  
**South Eastern Radio Association**  
**Southern Rangers Cricket Club**  
**SLGTTI OBA**  
**St John Ambulance Australia**  
**Tooradin Cricket Club**  
**Tooradin Dalmore Junior Football Club**  
**Wat Sereychum Australia**  
**VTA Tamil School - Narre Warren Campus**  
**Warneet Motor Yacht Club**  
**Warriors 4 Wildlife**

If you know an organisation that supports our community, please email the contact details to [Cassandra.Fernando.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Cassandra.Fernando.MP@aph.gov.au) to be included in my Grants Bulletin mailing list.

My office can assist with information about Federal Government services, including: **Veterans' Affairs, Immigration, Citizenship and Customs, Centrelink, NDIS, Medicare, ATO, Passports, Pensions, My Aged Care, and Child Support**

## **Get in touch**

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