



Hon Rob Lucas MLC

Shadow Minister for Health, Disabilities,
Ageing and Community Services



7 March 2014

Ross Womersley
Executive Director
South Australian Council of Social Service
Marjorie Black House
47 King William Rd
UNLEY SA 5061

Dear Ross,

RE: SA State Election 2014

Liberal Leader Steven Marshall has asked me to coordinate a response to your letter of 31 January 2014 after consultation with various Shadow Ministers responsible for portfolios including Treasury, Housing, Attorney-General and Child Development.

The fact that we have lost 25,000 jobs in South Australia since the State budget means there is no more important issue confronting any government elected in March than growing our state's economy and creating jobs. I encourage you to refer to Steven Marshall's website (www.stevenmarshall.com.au) where policies are outlined in greater detail.

Our responses to your questions are outlined below:

A Fair and Sustainable Tax Base

State Government revenue is largely driven by economic activity. The Federal Liberal Government and a Marshall State Government have a positive agenda to increase economic activity. This includes tax cuts.

Cost of Living Relief

Government taxes and household bills are skyrocketing under the Weatherill Labor Government. With cost of living spiralling out of control, families are sick of being hit with endless hikes to fees and charges.

That is why the State Liberals are taking real action to fix cost of living pressures. We have already announced that we will cut payroll tax to create jobs, scrap the car park tax, oppose toll roads, not introduce any new taxes or levies, cap council rate increases, increase energy and water concessions and remove the River Murray Levy on households. Details of these commitments are available at www.stevenmarshall.com.au



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Housing

A 15% target should be achievable for developers who are able to access Commonwealth assistance such as NRAS.

In November 2009, the State Labor Government signed South Australia up to a 35% target to ensure a range of housing options are made available to South Australians who are low income and may have other challenges such as disabilities and mental health. So far only 5% of the sale and transfer of titles to the community housing developers has been achieved. A Marshall Liberal Government will continue to work with community housing providers within the framework of this COAG agreement signed by the State Labor Government.

The Liberal Party will seek to work in a bipartisan way to cooperate and lobby the Federal Government for further funding to provide certainty in the delivery of housing and homelessness services and programs.

Encouraging sustainable design principles into all new constructions is something that we strongly support particularly for residential and domestic housing.

Health

A Marshall Liberal Government will support greater emphasis on primary health care programmes as budget circumstances permit. A Marshall Liberal Government will also seek to work cooperatively with the Federal Government in clarifying funding responsibilities for primary health care programmes.

A Marshall Liberal Government's plans for Mental Health are outlined in a policy document available at www.stevenmarshall.com.au

Social and Economic Participation

Child protection will be a core Marshall Liberal Government priority, as will providing support for families at risk. The State Liberals have already announced we will be appointing a Commissioner for Children and Young People and will provide the Commissioner with investigative powers through legislation. We will also uphold and continue to implement the DeBelle Inquiry recommendations.

A Marshall Liberal Government will remove responsibility for child protection from DECD and place it back with the Department of Families and Communities. A Liberal Government would be happy to engage with NGOs on ways in which children and young people can be better served by the child protection system and more successfully transition to independent adult life.



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We will be working with non-government organisations and support services including foster parents to ensure young adults are provided with services and support to develop an independent life and future of their own.

We will ensure that all applicants for assistance from Housing SA are treated in a fair and equitable manner.

Law and Justice

While a Marshall Liberal Government would not establish targets for custody, we see the 3% increase in the proportion of prisoners on remand in the past 18 months to more than 1 in 3 as a symptom of a growing dysfunction in the criminal justice system. Without setting a target, we would have a focus on reducing imprisonment on remand.

A Marshall Liberal Government would be committed to pursuing tangible improvements in justice outcomes and would look positively at the opportunity for justice reinvestment strategies, including diversion strategies, to this end.

A Marshall Liberal Government would implement the budgeted bail accommodation services and would be open to similar services for young people.

A Marshall Liberal Government would not have a target prison population or a goal for its own sake of reducing the number crimes with custody as a punishment.

A Marshall Liberal Government would audit the delivery of court-ordered diversionary and support programs and discuss with courts and the parole board the best ways to promote compliance and enforcement.

Community Services Sector Support

We will work with Federal Government to minimise red tape and the duplication of reporting programs that are state based.

We recognise that ongoing funding provides stability and surety for program planners and security for employees who work in the health and community services sector. We are committed to working towards delivering long term outcomes for evidence based programs which clearly demonstrate the need for continued funding.

Yours sincerely,

HON ROB LUCAS MLC
SHADOW MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AGEING