

Older People Speak Out

Media Release

Survey shows Greens understand seniors **– who make up 40 percent of the voters**

The Greens are far ahead of the major parties in their understanding of seniors' issues and the value of seniors to the community, according to responses to a survey sent to all candidates by Older People Speak Out.

OPSO president Val French said seniors wanted to know if candidates were listening to them. "Seniors hold 40 percent of the votes. We want to know where the parties stand on the solutions and policies we know are best for us," she said.

"The Greens voted they would implement all that seniors asked for in the survey:

- Improve policy co-ordination across Government by establishing a Department for Seniors.
- Reactivate Community Based Transport plans.
- Increase funding for the Seniors Enquiry Line and Elder Abuse Prevention Unit.
- Provide ongoing funding for Statewide Seniors Legal and Support Service, including establishing a 1800 number.
- Develop and provide innovative Public Housing.
- Improve funding for Statewide Social Isolation Policies.
- Maintain a targeted approach for Employment for Seniors.

The majority of independents also offered the same full support.

Family First voted they would support, or were likely to support, all except number one, which they said they would consider.

The LNP sent a policy response rather than tick the required boxes. They do not agree to a Department of Seniors or a Seniors Unit under Premiers ... their policy still places seniors in a Department including Disability Services, Multicultural Affairs, Seniors and Youth, but they maintain the department will be entirely upgraded to provide policy liaison with other departments, and will consult continually with seniors.

Most significant is the recognition of the tough times ahead and the need to have a department that can respond efficiently and effectively. They stress they will streamline paperwork, funding and bureaucracy.

Two million dollars a year will be provided to employ legal professionals “to help seniors through legal issues”.

The Labor Party responded with its full Seniors document. It will not establish a Department for Seniors or a Unit for Seniors under Premiers. It offers no alternative to the existing problem of a downgraded Office for Seniors with no direct advice from seniors into policy in the Department of Communities or any other departments relevant to Seniors across government. The response records the considerable number of commendable initiatives that have been established by the present government, yet it does not give any response to the need to provide adequate funding to them now to meet the needs of our fast-growing seniors’ population.

“However to be fair to the present government I would like to thank the Parliamentary Secretary for Communities, Rachel Nolan, MP, for the long consultations she gave us last week and her real vision for the future,” OPSO President Val French said.

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