



TAYLOR: HIGH SPEED RAIL PLAN OFF TRACK

Release date: 12 April 2013

Release time: Immediate

Angus Taylor, the Liberal Candidate for Hume, said he welcomed a debate about high speed rail on the Eastern Seaboard. At the same time, he warned that any debate must focus on regional development, and cannot be at the expense of shorter term infrastructure needs.

Mr Taylor said:

“Now, more than ever we need to talk about the development of the Hume corridor and the transport links to support it.

“However, if we are serious about high speed rail this we need to look at making it happen far sooner than Labor is suggesting, and with realistic funding models. The completion of the first phase is anticipated in 2035 - is just too far away to be taken seriously.

“Further, \$114 billion of public funding is utterly delusional given the amount of infrastructure investment Australia requires, and the fiscal environment we can expect”

Mr Taylor, whose career as a business advisor has included providing high level business advice to infrastructure companies, said:

“I have argued for a long time that getting high speed rail up and running in Australia should be more about regional development, than about getting planes out of the sky. There is quite simply no plausible economic case for high speed rail unless it is based on a meaningful, deliverable but ambitious regional development policy.

“The regional development plan must come first, and the consequential increases in regional land values provide a natural non-government funding model for high speed rail. This report misses that critical point, and again demonstrates that Labor has no connections to the regions

“However, at the end of the day, if you look at the fine print, today’s announcement is neither a policy nor a commitment by this government to high speed rail any time in the future. Rather, it is another big ‘announceable’ in an attempt by Labor to own the issue.

With its current record, Labor should focus on what it has already failed to deliver - Gonski, the NDIS, the NBN – instead of calling press conferences about grand plans they have no intention of kicking off for almost fifteen years.”

Mr Taylor said:

“We need vision, not hallucination. I will work hard to make sure that regional development is central to any high speed rail initiative. I will use my experience in this area to make sure we develop realistic plans and funding models and meaningful timeframes.

Please contact Angus Taylor on 0413 963 113 for further information.