





# Chapter 1: Labor Values

Victorians have recently faced some of the greatest challenges in our history;

- Bushfires swept through our State on Black Saturday;
- The Global Financial Crisis threatened our economy and many people's jobs, and
- A prolonged drought has taken its toll on many communities.

But through it all Victorians pulled together, and we are coming through in very good shape.

Victorians believe in a fair go for all; that everyone should have the opportunity to do well in life.

They expect to be treated with dignity and respect, and they believe that we should extend these same values to the people around us. And Victorians want to live in a place that is safe and secure for themselves and their children.

These are Labor values, held by Labor for more than 100 years.

Making Victoria a great place to live, work and raise a family by delivering economic growth, a fairer distribution of the benefits, creating better jobs, world class education and health services, safer communities and protecting the environment - that's what Labor means by Standing Up For Victorian Families.

## WHAT LABOR STANDS FOR

Labor stands for a free, just and open society, founded on progressive ideals and a commitment to the following values:

### FAIRNESS

Labor's objective has always been to reach out, embrace, protect and support those most in need.

Labor believes:

- Everyone should have an equal chance to achieve their potential;
- Government has a critical role to ensure equal opportunity for all and protect individuals from discrimination;
- Everybody's contribution should be respected, and
- Everyone has the right to participate in Victoria's prosperous future.

Labor is committed to protecting and supporting those who are disadvantaged or struggling to cope.

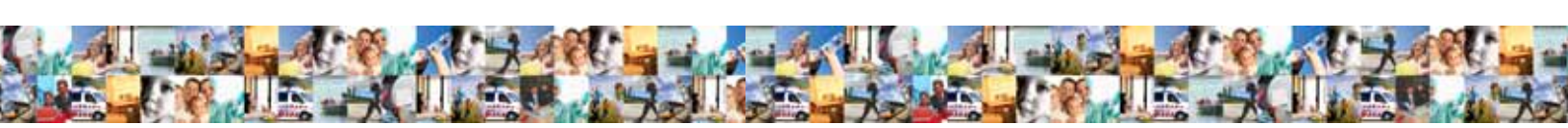
We believe in a State where the distribution of power, wealth and opportunity is fairly spread across the entire community.

### OPPORTUNITY

Labor believes that all Victorians deserve the opportunity to participate in everything that Victoria has to offer. That's why we believe in creating meaningful jobs to give all Victorians the opportunity to develop their skills. And why we believe in delivering great health and education services for every family and individual, no matter what their postcode, so that everyone can participate in our democratic processes.

These opportunities are underpinned by Labor's commitment to keeping the community safe and secure, managing a strong economy and ensuring fiscally responsible spending.

Labor believes in improving the living standards of all Victorians and will strive to ensure that everybody in our community has access to the government services they need.



## **RESPECT & DIGNITY**

Labor believes that every person should respect themselves, those around them, and the wider community. We believe that governments should encourage a culture of respect, which is a value all Victorians can share and embrace, no matter what their background.

Labor recognises that all Victorians have a stake in ensuring that our community is a safe, fair and just place to live.

## **SAFETY & SECURITY**

Victorians have the right to feel safe in their community, able to go about their lives with confidence and security, relying on the protection of the law and an effective and well resourced police force.

Enough is enough, we will not tolerate violence in society.

We believe that violence of any kind is never acceptable – be it physical, emotional or economic or being threatened at home, school, work or on the streets.

We believe that individual liberties are best protected by a democratic electoral system; clear, unambiguous laws; an accountable police force and an independent judiciary.

## **RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

All Australians enjoy the basic right to live freely in our society. Victoria has adopted Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities that articulates those rights, ensures that they are reflected in the laws passed by Parliament and are upheld by our public institutions.

With rights comes the responsibility to respect the rights of others and to behave honestly, humanely and fairly.

Those responsibilities must be exercised:

- By individuals, towards each other and the community which supports them;
- By groups and organisations, towards each other and the wider community, and
- By governments, who need to carefully manage state finances and deliver positive outcomes in key service areas such as health, education and community safety.

Labor supports the role of democratic union organisations and the right of all workers to organise and belong to a union or employee association. Labor believes in advancing and protecting the rights of working people and their families.

## **COMMUNITY**

The quality of life that we enjoy is tied to the communities in which we live. Labor believes in building a society in which every person is able to actively participate in their community and that their contribution is respected and valued. Government has a key role in bringing communities together, enriching lives, enhancing our society and providing appropriate support so everybody can genuinely participate.

## **DIVERSITY**

Victoria has a lot to offer and is an attractive place for people from interstate or overseas to come and live, work and raise a family. Labor embraces cultural diversity that supports respect and understanding. The harmonious, multicultural nature of Victorian society is one of its great strengths.

To Labor diversity is not just about our cultural and linguistic origins or the multi faith basis of our community. It also goes to the diversity of opinions, religious beliefs, ages, family structure, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity and the many things that make us different as we live together side by side.



Each person brings their own abilities, knowledge and culture, enriching the community and adding to the overall depth and breadth of Victorian society.

## **RECONCILIATION**

Genuine reconciliation with Aboriginal people is crucial to our capacity to face the world as a united, peaceful and just nation. Labor supports practical and symbolic measures to achieve reconciliation based on mutual respect, acceptance and critically, closing the gap between Aboriginal people and other Australians on opportunity, health and life outcomes.

## **DEMOCRACY**

Labor upholds the essential democratic principle that every person should participate in decisions that affect his or her life. That right includes electing and participating in government, having a voice in decisions and institutions that impact on local communities and meaningful participation in workplace decision making.

Inclusive decision making restores faith in representative democracies, improves community outcomes and provides confidence in building a common future for generations of Victorians.

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

Labor recognises that tackling climate change is an enormous challenge but also presents enormous opportunities. Labor understands that climate change has been caused by human activity, and that the science of climate change is updating all the time.

Early action climate change by improving the sustainability and efficiency of our communities and economy will make our lives healthier and safer, create thousands of clean energy jobs across Victoria, and preserve our precious natural environment for future generations.

## **LABOR'S DISTINCTIVE APPROACH**

### **THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT**

Labor believes that strong, purposeful government leadership, with an effective and efficient public sector, operating in partnership with a thriving private sector is the best way to fairly deliver opportunities and security for all Victorians.

We believe that a government that brings all Victorians together is the best way to realise the full potential of individuals, communities and the economy.

Labor views government as a guardian of the common good that strives to protect the public interest as well as individual rights. Labor believes it is in the community interest for economic development to be balanced with social responsibilities.

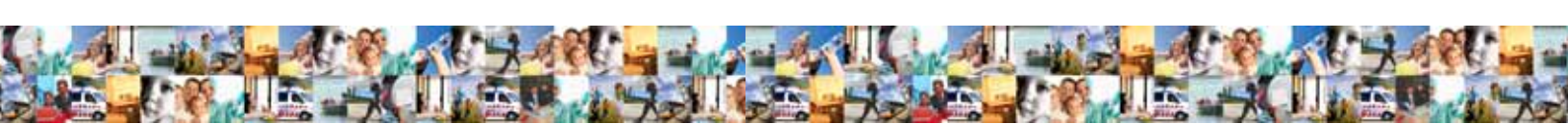
Labor believes there is a role for Government to address market force imbalances, to deliver fair outcomes for families and communities.

### **FOCUSING ON RESULTS**

Labor is committed to honest, open, transparent and accountable government, where schools, hospitals and community organisations have the resources to run world class services and their performance is measured to ensure Victorians get full value for their money.

The benefits for the community must be measured in terms of results. Government should constantly strive to deliver new and innovative services.

Delivering world class services ensures Victoria remains Australia's most sustainable and liveable State.



Labor believes in meeting the needs of the entire community by delivering the best facilities, services, care and support.

## **THE ENVIRONMENT, SOCIETY & THE ECONOMY**

Labor leads the way in recognising the critical interrelationship between the environment, society and the economy. Climate change mitigation and adaptation poses challenges and opportunities to our community and our economy, and early action will make transitioning to a clean energy economy more effective.

There are strong links between these domains:

- Healthy ecosystems provide us with clean air and water and support biodiversity and clean food production to ensure that the essential needs of our society are met;
- Social harmony reflects personal well-being which includes good health, happiness, community engagement, cultural enrichment and economic security;
- A strong and vibrant economy is a key factor in achieving prosperity for all Victorians;
- Economic and social progress can only endure if they are environmentally sustainable and are embraced by strong communities;
- Individuals have a responsibility to the community, to contribute environmentally by reducing their use of resources to create a sustainable future, socially through their community involvement and economically through taxes and their work; and
- Thousands of new clean energy jobs can be created through embracing sustainability.

Much has been achieved but there are new challenges to address and many opportunities to build a better future for the State. Labor believes its values are central to realising that vision.

## **THE CONCEPT OF “RURAL PROOFING” POLICY**

### **WHAT IS RURAL PROOFING?**

More than a quarter of Victorians live in rural or regional communities. Rural-based businesses and farmers make a major contribution to our economy.

Rural Proofing is a concept being adopted by governments in New Zealand and Britain to take into account the different needs of people living and working in rural areas and consider the implications of policy changes for rural communities.

Although the concept of rural proofing is new to government in Australia – it is being taken up by some rural groups. The experience overseas suggests it is a tool that could be adopted in Victoria to ensure that the rural implications of policy are more fully considered as agencies develop new ideas and when Cabinet considers decisions on policy funding and legislation.

All people, no matter where they live, should have access to great services to live, work and run businesses, contribute and share in Victoria's prosperity. Government policy making and implementation should take this into account – testing the implications of change specifically from a rural perspective.

In developing the 2010 Platform the ALP has applied the concept of rural proofing to:

- Identify particular implications of policies for rural communities;
- Take into account any significant differences between rural and urban communities in how policies may work, and
- Develop targeted policies in areas of special need in rural and regional Victoria.

Through this Platform – sections have been included in each Chapter to highlight the special measures that may need to be taken to ensure policies are applied taking into account the special needs and priorities of rural and regional Victorians.