



## JOINT NEWS RELEASE

Sharon Bird MP  
Federal Member for Cunningham

Jennie George MP  
Federal Member for Throsby

### **Illawarra Federal Labor MPs elected to head key Federal Parliamentary Committees**

Federal Illawarra Labor MPs, Sharon Bird and Jennie George, have been elected to head Federal Parliamentary Committees today, influencing key Rudd Labor Government policy on education, training, climate change and the environment.

Ms Bird has been unanimously elected Chair of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Training.

Ms George has been unanimously elected Chair of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Climate Change, Water, Environment and The Arts.

Both Ms Bird and Ms George said that the Parliamentary Committee's they chair will play a significant role in influencing the policy development and implementation of the Rudd Labor Government's policy agenda on education, training, climate change and the environment.

The Rudd Labor Government has pledged an Education Revolution, including providing a \$1 billion computer technology programme to secondary school students and establishing \$2.5 billion Trade Training Centres in all Australian secondary schools.

"The skills shortage in Australia is also a key concern of the Government as we address the increasing inflation challenge", Ms Bird said.

Ms George said that the Government had ratified the Kyoto Protocol as one of its first acts, ensuring Australia played a key role in on-going international negotiations to reduce global greenhouse emissions.

“We are awaiting the final report and recommendations of the Garnaut Review, to establish an interim Australian target to compliment the election pledge of reducing Australia’s emissions by 60% by 2050”, she said.

The House of Representative Standing Committee on Education and Training will monitor policy issues within the portfolio of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education, the Hon Julia Gillard MP.

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Climate Change, Water, Environment and the Arts will monitor policy issues within the portfolio of the Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator the Hon Penny Wong, and the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts, the Hon Peter Garrett MP.

House of Representatives Standing Committees comprise Labor, Liberal, National and Independent Federal Members of Parliament.

The Committees undertake public inquiries, accept public submissions, and table a report with recommendations at the conclusion of the inquiry. The Government is required to formally respond to the Committee recommendations within three months.

Inquiry topics can be referred by the relevant Minister, or the Committee may undertake its own inquiry following a review of Department or statutory agency annual reports.

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