

FREE

CUNNINGHAM EXAMINER

MARCH 2006



Stop Press: Kim Beazley Free Family BBQ

Come and hear Labor Leader Kim Beazley speaking about the changes to Australia's Industrial Relations system.

These changes will have an impact on your working life and your family.

Meet Kim Beazley at this family BBQ - details on page 2.

Wollongong's fight for AusLink share

Wollongong was frozen out of the Howard Government's \$12 billion AusLink programme for 5 years. But Sharon Bird has a plan to change that.

AusLink is the Federal Government's funding program for roads, rail and ports to meet Australia's growing freight transport needs.

Sharon hosted a 2-day visit last month by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services to Wollongong as part of its current inquiry into Australia's road, rail and port links.

'The Committee heard first hand of the challenges facing Wollongong in dealing with transport, especially with the expansion of the Port of Kembla and the largest commuter corridor in Australia.'

'I have purposely focused on the need to complete the Maldon-Dombarton rail link to the Port of Kembla,' Sharon said.

Support for this key infrastructure project for the future has been provided by BHP Billiton Illawarra Coal and the Port Kembla Coal Terminal.

The University of Wollongong's Professor Philip Laird, a long-time supporter of the link, provided important background information.

Sharon Bird said that the Committee would continue to take evidence and complete its report by mid-year.

'I am quietly confident this report will contain some good news for Wollongong, and establish our argument for a fair share of the next 5-year funding round of AusLink,' Sharon said.

For more information please phone Sharon's office on 4228 5899.



Sharon Bird is fighting for funding to improve local transport infrastructure.

Beware! Dodgy SMS scam



Mobile phone users should be aware that a new SMS scam could leave a big dent in your pocket, Sharon Bird has warned.

The scam sends you an SMS message and when you open it you are deemed to have accepted the service.

The next you know about it is when your mobile account arrives and the extent of the fraud is revealed.

Some mobile accounts have increased by \$30 to \$40.

Sharon Bird has raised the scam with the Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, and NSW Minister for Fair Trading.



If you want to promote a community event or just make a comment either write to me at PO Box 387,

Wollongong 2520 or send an email to Sharon.Bird.MP@aph.gov.au

Sharon Bird

Sharon Bird MP
Federal Member for Cunningham

If you are aware of phone scams please phone Sharon's office on 4228 5899.

Making better use of our local infrastructure

Wollongong industry should establish logistics chain coordination to plan ahead for future transport needs and make effective use of infrastructure.

That's Sharon Bird's opinion following a visit to Newcastle as part of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services inquiry and a briefing by the Hunter Valley Coal Chain Logistics Team.

The export of coal in the Hunter requires the co-ordination of 30 coal mines, above and below rail operations, coal loader and ships.

A simple example of the co-operation involves maintenance.

If the rail line requires maintenance for a day, the whole logistics chain organises its own maintenance requirements at the same time.

'Such simple co-operation across the whole logistics chain has seen coal export capacity in the Hunter increase from 69-million tonnes in 2002 to 84-million tonnes last year,' Sharon said.

Every industry logistics chain was unique, but the Hunter Valley Coal Chain Logistics Chain was an impressive model that Wollongong industry should examine.

'I am pleased that since proposing this idea many industry representatives in Wollongong have indicated they are keen to further explore its potential,' Sharon Bird said.



Your invitation



You are invited to a
**FREE FAMILY
BBQ**

Special Guest Kim Beazley
Federal Labor Leader

12noon, Sunday, 5 March 2006

Lang Park, Wollongong (opposite City Beach)

Labor creates IR Taskforce to monitor extreme laws

The Howard Government's extreme, divisive and unfair industrial relations laws were passed by the Federal Parliament last year.

Some parts of the 1500 page legislation were enacted in December 2005, but the rest will come into affect in March 2006.

Already Sharon's office has received calls, letters, emails and personal visits from workers seeking clarification on the laws, and reveal some employers are confused and unsure of what is expected of them or their workers.

The Federal Labor Party has established an Industrial Relations Task Force to examine the effect of the Government's new laws on families, women and young people, and to track specific abuses of these new laws.

Sharon Bird is a member of this Task Force.

As part of the Howard Government's industrial relations changes, it is not well known that an Award Review is currently under way into wage classification and award rationalisation.

A disturbing issue is that the Government appears not to understand the difference between award rationalisation and wage classification, which means that worker's will face cuts to pay and conditions.

Have you suffered as a result of the new workplace laws? If your wages or conditions have worsened due to the new Industrial Relations changes please phone Sharon Bird MP on 4228 5899 or send an email to Sharon.Bird.MP@aph.gov.au



Sharon Bird meets with TWU delegates at their worksite.

Banking:

Right choices, save money & keep debt low

Banking and financial choices have exploded over the last 20-years, which have provided many opportunities for owning a home or establishing a business.

At the same time, banking and finance has become more complex, fees and charges continue to increase.

Many, including young people, are also becoming trapped in unnecessary debt.

Recently Sharon Bird met with the Australian Bankers' Association (ABA) to discuss banking issues and the rise in household debt.

'When there are so many different products available it's too easy for people to end up with unnecessary fees and charges and I believe information – in plain English – is important and I raised this with the ABA,' said Sharon Bird.

A number of specific booklets and fact sheets are available to help you make the right choices, help save money and keep debt manageable.

Contact Sharon's office for more information.



These booklets on Smarter Banking are available from Sharon's office.

Sharon's speeches

Sharon is in the process of establishing a website to enable people to keep up to date with what she is doing in Parliament and our community.

In the meantime she is compiling a trial email and mailing list which you can join by filling out your details on page 4 of this newspaper.

Keep in touch • Join Sharon's mailing list.
Please turn to page 4 of this newspaper.

Breast cancer: Herceptin must be put on PBS

Sharon Bird recently tabled a petition in Federal Parliament with 1,020 signatures urging the Howard Government to progress the approval of Herceptin on the Pharmaceuticals Benefit Scheme for first-stage breast cancer sufferers.

Michelle Radford, from Stanwell Park, was diagnosed with breast cancer and has undergone surgery, chemotherapy and radiation treatment. Her oncologist has recommended treatment with Herceptin in an effort to stop the cancer returning to other organs and bones.

Michelle, her husband Steven and their five children, were faced with the prospect of selling their family home to raise the \$60,000 needed to fund her treatment.

Sharon made representations to the Federal Minister for Health and to Roche Pharmaceuticals in an effort to make this drug available at an affordable price.

The community has rallied around Michelle and her family and have raised over \$30,000.

The campaign has been supported by the Illawarra Credit Union, Helensburgh Lions Club, Helensburgh Bi-Lo and the Rotary Club of Corrimal, amongst many other businesses and local media.

'I will continue to lobby on behalf of women like Michelle, and their families, to ensure that this life-saving treatment is affordable for all women, not just the wealthy,' Sharon said.

You can make a donation to help Michelle through any branch of the Illawarra Credit Union to the Michelle Radford Trust (Member No: 572410/ Account No: 249910299).

Please phone 4228 5899 for further details.



From left clockwise, friend Tracey Weir, Michael Halloran, CEO of the Illawarra Credit Union, friend Jan Hill, Sharon Bird MP, Michelle, Steven, Keena, Moriah, Keelan and Liam Radford.

Join the mailing list • Free kits, factsheets & DVDs

To join Sharon's mailing list or to order your free copies of kits or DVDs, please fill out the form below.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Families Information Kit | <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans Information Kit | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Information Kit | <input type="checkbox"/> Net Alert: Parents Internet Safety Tool Kit (CD-Rom) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Keepwatch Toddler Water Safety Factsheets | <input type="checkbox"/> Superannuation Kit | <input type="checkbox"/> Pensioner Information Kit | <input type="checkbox"/> Connecting With Computers (DVD) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fire Safety at Home 'Be Prepared' | <input type="checkbox"/> Cot Safety | <input type="checkbox"/> Keeping Baby Safe | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe Toys for Kids |
| Your contact details | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, please add me to Sharon Bird's mailing list | |

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please mail to: Sharon Bird MP, Member for Cunningham, PO Box 387, Wollongong NSW 2520 or fax to: 4228 5077

Healthier children

Labor's Shadow Health Minister, Julia Gillard, has released a discussion paper to improve the health care and well-being of Australian children.

Our children are suffering from rising rates of diabetes, childhood asthma, autism, depression, anxiety, and a range of behavioural problems.

Too many children and young people are dying from preventable causes. More than 50% of deaths amongst children and young people are due to accidents, poisoning, violence and suicide.

Health care services need to recognise the crucial role of prevention and early intervention for all Australians, but particularly for the next generation of Australians.

For a copy of Julia Gillard's discussion paper please phone Sharon's office on 4228 5899.



Sharon Bird is fighting for changes to health care policy to help our children.

WIN A BOOK VOUCHER

HEALTHY EATING COLORING COMPETITION – CLOSING 30 MARCH 2006.

SEND YOUR ENTRY TO: HEALTHY COLORING COMPETITION, PO BOX 387, WOLLONGONG 2520

Name _____ Age _____ Phone _____

Address _____