

Week in Review with Kristina Keneally

# NSW leads other States in economic growth



NSW has recorded seven straight quarters of economic growth, with the NSW economy growing by 1.4 per cent in the September quarter. In contrast, Victoria, Queensland and South Australia all recorded negative economic growth for the September quarter.

## Major reforms delivered in Parliament

The Keneally Government has concluded the Parliamentary term by delivering major reforms for NSW:

- New ethics classes will be available in NSW public schools from next year, following the passing of laws by the NSW Parliament. The classes will commence from Term 1, 2011 and will initially be offered to Years 5 and 6 and be progressively rolled out to Years K-6.
- Fairer demerit point laws for motorists – increasing the number of demerit points for licence holders and reducing or deleting demerit points for 22 offences not related to safety or speeding.
- Protection of portable long service leave entitlements for 44,000 cleaners in NSW.
- New laws to strengthen

the rights of victims of crime and protect the community from serious sex offenders.

- New laws to help settle disputes out of court and reforms to class action laws.

These changes follow the passage of other major legislation, including nation-leading campaign finance reforms and the expansion of NSW National Parks to an area equal the size of Tasmania.

## Stronger Together Stage 2 - \$2 billion historic investment in disability services will deliver 47,000 new places

The NSW Government has announced a further \$2 billion investment in disability services over the next five years that will deliver 47,000 new disability places. The investment is the second phase of the NSW Government's Stronger Together initiative, bringing the NSW Government's total investment in disability services to \$5.5 billion over ten years.

## Major events for Sydney and NSW

Premier Kristina Keneally has launched the 2011 NSW Events Calendar, which includes more than 80 ticketed and free events expected to deliver more than \$600 million in-

to the NSW economy. The NSW Government has also released details for Oprah's upcoming visit, launched the second Sydney Telstra 500 V8 Supercar race and announced the line-up for the Premier's Christmas Gala Concerts for seniors.

## Premier announces ANZAC Memorial Scholarships to honour the ANZAC Spirit

Twenty of the State's top history students will make a pilgrimage to memorials in Vietnam and Gallipoli next year as part of the Premier's ANZAC Memorial Scholarships. The scholarships are awarded to students in Years 9 and Year 10 who otherwise may not have the opportunity to travel overseas.

## Sydney's Opera House and Harbour Bridge turn red for World AIDS Day 2010

Premier Kristina Keneally joined Prime Minister Julia Gillard and U2's Bono to turn the Sydney Opera House and Harbour Bridge red to mark World AIDS Day 2010.

## Decision on Tillegra Dam

After a merit-based assessment process, the NSW Government has refused the planning application for the proposed



Tillegra Dam near Dungog. No further plans for a dam in the Hunter will be considered. The comprehensive assessment process demonstrates the independence of the NSW Government's planning policies.

## World's Largest Bank Opens in Sydney – Australian First

The first Australian branch of the world's largest bank – the China Construction Bank – has been opened in Sydney. The China Construction Bank's investment in Sydney is expected to create 30 jobs and generate \$70 million in investment for NSW over the next five years. The opening follows Premier Keneally's meeting with the Bank's President during a trade mission earlier this year.

## KENEALLY SAYS O'FARRELL GST THREAT IS DANGEROUS

NSW Premier Kristina Keneally today labelled NSW Opposition leader Barry O'Farrell's threat to tear up the Commonwealth-State GST agreement as "dangerous", saying he was putting the more than \$6 billion in hospital funding and 488 hospital beds at risk.

"Barry O'Farrell is risking thousands of elective surgery procedures like knee and hip replacements and cataract operations – just to make a political point against Canberra.

"Barry O'Farrell is being irresponsible and – dangerous," Ms Keneally said.

On SKY News Australian Agenda, NSW Opposition leader, Barry O'Farrell claimed he would withhold the GST from the Common-

wealth, if he became Premier.

Earlier this year, Western Australia's Premier refused to sign the COAG agreement and the new Victorian Premier in Victoria is reconsidering the health agreement.

"Barry O'Farrell has not understood the ramifications of his comments," Ms Keneally said.

"This threatens access to elective surgery and undermines improvements to emergency departments – as verified by last week's independent report of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

"In April, NSW secured an historic hospital agreement providing more than \$6 billion for health and hospitals and 488 hospital beds with Canberra.

"NSW has met all national health network implementation

milestones and has set up the local health network boundaries to oversee the reform.

"We have recruited the chairs and they will begin operating on 1 January. We will be the first jurisdiction in Australia to do so."

Ms Keneally said the Liberal and National Party MPs would have serious reservations about Barry O'Farrell's comments as they would impact on the allocation of hospital beds.

"Will the MP for Penrith support 26 beds from the Nepean Hospital being taken away?"

"Will the MP for Coffs Harbour support the loss of 20 beds from Coffs Harbour or the MP for North Shore who will lose 20 beds from Royal North Shore Hospital?" Ms Keneally asked.

## AHC congratulates Kogarah MP on Parliamentary Address

In an address to the Parliament of New South Wales, Kogarah MP Cherie Burton spoke eloquently about the Australian dimension of the Hellenic, Armenian and Assyrian Genocides. In her own words, "Our own citizens, Australians, bear witness to some of the horrible events that have occurred overseas. That history should not be denied. We need to address what happened historically, recognise it and encourage all Australians to accept it."

Ms Burton spoke about the genocides that took place during World War I and its aftermath against the indigenous peoples of the Ottoman Turkish Empire: Greeks, Armenians and Assyrians.

"With the outbreak of the war", the plans of the government of the Ottoman Turkish Empire "began to be implemented. When the Anzacs landed on the Gallipoli Peninsula, there were Greek people living there, tilling the soil and fishing the waters. There were also Turkish tax collectors, police and soldiers. These non-Turks are the people who were deported; these are the people who were massacred".

## ANZAC eyewitnesses

When the Anzacs left the Gallipoli Peninsula, they left behind hundreds of prisoners of war - men such as Kogarah-born Petty Officer H.J.E. Kinder and Petty Officer Stephen Gilbert, a salesman from Hurstville, both crewmen of HMAS AE2, and Second Lieutenant, Australian Flying Corps, Laurence Henry Smith, also from Hurstville.

The Anzac prisoners of war went through a series of prisoner of war camps, typically being marched from one to another on bread and water rations, in bitter cold or blistering heat. While Kinder, Smith and many of their comrades were eventually released, Gilbert and more than 60 other Anzac prisoners perished from a combination of exposure, disease, malnutrition and exhaustion."

"I am indebted to the research of Dr Panayiotis Diamadis, a Director of the Australian Institute for Holocaust and Genocide Studies. It was due to his research that I realised that this is an issue for the people of New South Wales, particularly because our own servicemen witnessed the suffering of the indigenous peoples of Anatolia: the Greeks, the Armenians and the Assyrians."

## Memory and Truth

In Ms Burton's words, "this is not even a matter of blame. This is a matter of history, and history must neither be erased nor forgotten. We must remember and speak the truth. In this way, we can secure recognition of a genocide which is still very real and very heartfelt by the Australian Hellenic community, by the Australian Armenian community, and by the Assyrian community in Australia today."

The Australian Hellenic Council serves as the peak public affairs body of the Australian Hellenic community, seeking to bring together community organisations on a select range of issues of concern to Australian Hellenes countrywide. Parliamentary recognition of the Hellenic, Armenian and Assyrian Genocides is one such issue.

The full text is available at:

<http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parliament/hanstrans.nsf/MostRecentLA/LA>

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