Candidates Come Together in Eden Monaro to call on the Prime Minister to commit $2 Billion to the Eden to Canberra Rail Project

Candidates in the Eden-Monaro by-election are coming together across political lines to support the most important transport project for the Eden-Monaro region and its people for over a century, when the rail project was first proposed by Charles Scrivener in 1905. The proposed route runs along a similar path to the ancient Bundian Way. (project overview attached)

A Media Conference will be held with local and national media at 3pm, Monday 22 June at the Queanbeyan Rail Station, where it’s expected that all 14 candidates for the by-election will stand together to ensure this Eden to Canberra (and beyond) Rail Project becomes a reality.

Project representatives at the media conference will include: Edwin Michell BE BCom, Author of the Plan and Engineer, Economist and Farmer; Geoff Bowland LGE MIEAust CPEng NER, Civil & Structural Engineer; Lee Evans, Editor of the former Cooma-Monaro Express. All 3 are members of the Cooma and Monaro Progress Association. www.coomansw.com.au

Jason Potter, the Australian Federation Party candidate was the first candidate to express public support for the project in this election. Jason sees the enormous benefit of this rail project because it can underpin the future growth and economic development of the region post the drought, bushfires and COVID 19. Jason is committed to helping bring all the candidates together to make this rail project a reality.

“This project will underpin, sustainable jobs, tourism and transport to be provided to the whole region in an environmentally friendly way that provides opportunities for business that are desperately needed.” Jason said.

The Prime Minister recently announced $72 Billion to be brought forward to invest in important national infrastructure. The Eden-Canberra Rail Project is significantly important and the majority of the people in the region want it to be built, as they see the immediate and long-term benefits to the local communities and towns in the region.

“Furthermore, there are calls to identify important east-west links to the inland rail project and with Eden being one of the best deep port locations in Australia, this Rail Project provides so many benefits to not only the Region but also the inland of Australia, and to existing port cities where congestion will be eased.” Jason said.

Currently the following candidates have publicly supported the project and we are asking the remaining Candidates to attend and publicly support the Rail Project at the Media Conference on Monday 22 June @ 3pm at Queanbeyan Rail Station.

Including Jason Potter: Australian Federation Party There are now 9 of the 14 candidates who are supporting the Eden-Canberra Rail Project, and we expect the final 5 to stand up and support the people of the Eden Monaro Electorate to call on the Prime Minister to Announce his Commitment of $2 Billion towards the project, to demonstrate his government’s support of the people in local communities with infrastructure investment and not just make decisions on political lines like the recent sports rorts grants.

We send a call out to all the people of the Eden-Monaro and Canberra region, who support this project to attend and support the candidates from all parties and independents on Monday afternoon at 3pm at Queanbeyan Station and show the media and the Federal Government that this project is important to the people of Eden Monaro and the $2 Billion commitment to the rail project is a commitment required by the current Government NOW!

For more information, please contact
Glenn O’Rourke – 0405 111 228 / eden-mono@federationparty.org
www.australianfederationparty.org.au

SEE ATTACHED  Project Summary attached
A Concept Plan for Canberra to Eden Railway was written in June 2018 by engineer Edwin Michell. He wrote it for Cooma and Monaro Progress Association.

It was straightforward engineering to plan a connection from Canberra Airport to the existing disused railway alongside Hume ACT; and to plan improvements to the existing disused line from Hume to Bombala.

From the Monaro near Bombala, to Eden, Michell investigated three routes for the railway to descend to the coast. The chosen route, by far the most favourable, followed the valleys of Wog Wog Creek and the Towamba River, passing the township of Towamba. This route is close to the route found by surveyor Scrivener in 1905.

Michell engineered the alignment by balancing various factors: economic, political, social, and environmental. The design speeds resulting were 160 kilometres per hour for tilting passenger trains and, for freight trains on the same line: 115 kilometres per hour maximum, slowing to 40 kilometres per hour for fully laden trains on the steeper uphill gradients.

By August 2018, with the aid of a grant from the Snowy Monaro Regional Council to the Association, Michell had preliminarily estimated the construction cost of the railway as 2.54 billion dollars allowing for a moderate level of risks, and 2.95 billion dollars allowing for a high level of risks. The proposed period of construction was five years from 2022 to 2026.

The New South Wales Government announced on 22 August 2018 a commitment of one million dollars towards a feasibility study into a freight and passenger rail line between Canberra and the Port of Eden. The announcement was delivered at Cooma railway station by the Premier, supported by the Deputy Premier and the Transport Minister.

The Government’s country railway agent closed competitive tenders on the promised feasibility study on 27 February 2019. On 14 May 2019, representatives of the Cooma and Monaro Progress Association met visitors at their request on the basis that they represented the winning tenderer for the feasibility study.

The Concept Plan is documented at www.coomansw.com.au

Effects of the improved and new faster railway between Canberra and Eden will be:

1. to take sea freight between the inland and one of the finest harbours in Australia, relieving congestion in and approaching other ports
2. to promote more tourism and business at the coast, in Canberra, and in areas between
3. to attract population to the Monaro by reducing commute times to Canberra
4. to lessen the reliance on road transport
5. to more economically transport freight with less stress on the environment.