

25 November 2013

To limit the damage to our economy, budgets into the future and Australian's psyche we must have a debate around the following:-

1. The merits of 10% of the GST revenue going back to States being assigned to a State Affordable Housing Fund to maintain affordable/community housing supply in States and keep the focus on States providing housing. The Government actuaries can run the numbers.
2. Consider the merits of changing where education funding goes. Draw it away from family support and payments into student housing using State land on 25 year leases. This funding would also come from less need for child protection programs and intensive family support programs and has potential to improve educational and developmental outcomes for children and teenagers and promote the adults into rehabilitation and employment. Children and teenagers would not be 'wards of the State' but would voluntarily have student housing as an option and the government would promote it as policy as a healthy option.
3. Remove the Job Subsidy Program from Job Services Australia and the Disability Employment Service programs due the "churn" of the subsidy by Employers for negligible outcomes which only provide temporary employment. Is this a good spend of taxpayer funding at around \$3,000 per unemployed person when it appears on evidence to place around 50% or less people in a job that lasts between 3 months to 1 year in duration (see attach).
4. Consider the merits of creating:-
 - A list of 10 major national community service organisations who will act as "Crisis providers" (in event of climate events, major weather events and fires) and in the quiet times be funded to be housing support providers in partnership with community housing providers targeting services to where they are most needed (in the home). During crisis events, we use civil society community organisations (like Rotary, Lions etc as "Reservists" and other small community organisations who have members who want to be trained to provide for domestic citizens until the major national crisis is stabilised. We must not underestimate what is forming in our region and how this will affect Australia. We must prepare and the NCA is an opportunity to do so.
5. Bring in Income Management and Work for the Dole for all under the age of 55. For over 55s to promote social inclusion, they must participate in some form of volunteering .
6. Mental Health Reform – to improve access to programs and community supports and to act as a longitudinal study we must consider the cost-benefit analysis of having a Mental Health Triage Centre in most major city hospitals and major rural centre's to service people once in lieu of the potentiality that the Better Access Program (Dept of Health) is under pressure for cuts. The Mental Health Triage referrals to services could run via the new Medibank reform.

7. The Adelaide via Perth to Darwin Highway is a major piece of transport infrastructure which is important to the nation and will provide indigenous employment, employment for men who are disproportionately losing jobs right now. By having the Highway following State boundaries, it will force the States to pool funding and maintenance costs and prevent rorting of road funding. It would also promote confidence in the private sector to invest. It would bring jobs, improved transport costs and importantly open up the centre of Australia, creating the vision of a major regional airport in the near future and create potential for water to be piped from the North of Australia to improve water supply to the southern area's helping farmer's rehabilitate the land and expand arable land for food supply.

I am not an economist but I believe what is listed above has potential to provide jobs, reduce replication of service delivery and increase the pool of funding in the Budget to direct into other areas. I am in the process of reading the new Garnaut book which is partly why I am compelled to write to you. The other reason is that I have seen the graphs that the RBA are putting out (Gruen and Parkinson, 2013).

Thank you.