

Dear Members,

As the Chief Executive Officer of a community based organisation I have always remained apolitical and even now, I would never presume to tell people how they should vote or for whom. However, I cannot let the recent Andrews Government announcements pass without some comment, as they are devastating for our staff (over 140 local people) and our community.

“Victoria’s “Roadmap to Reopening” is ill-conceived, unworkable and fails more than three million Victorians who are members of community clubs, according to peak industry body Community Clubs Victoria (CCV)”. I agree.

I have firsthand knowledge that the hospitality industry, including CCV, has been working for months with the Government on a re- opening plan that was based on the successful NSW model. This has been totally ignored by the government.

For the Government to show such disdain for regional Victoria would usually be shocking but more recently it has just become the norm for the Andrews Government. The enforced restrictions will mean that the Murray Downs Golf and Country Club will remain closed and the Swan Hill Club and Spoons Riverside are only able to provide takeaway service. The golf course and bowling facilities are closed at a time when our local community is looking for some mental health relief through exercising and playing sport.

To continue to include Geelong and Colac in the regional Victorian numbers and hold back the rest of regional Victoria is unacceptable. To suggest that the whole state must go 14 days without any cases before we can reopen all of our facilities is laughable. NSW is up and running and they still have some active cases on a daily basis, but what the NSW government does is manage the situation. The Victorian Government, with its recent announcements, has clearly articulated that they are incapable of managing the situation and it would seem the people of Victoria must continue to suffer the consequences.

The Hospitality and Clubs Industry has proven it can deliver a COVIDsafe environment. This has been demonstrated in NSW and QLD where they have re-opened safely, managed any outbreaks and got the state economy up and running.

Community Clubs Victoria is calling upon its member clubs to write to their local member of parliament to express their concern. I have done so and will do so again. I have also spoken with several MPs, State and Federal, and will continue to lobby on behalf of our staff, our Club and our community. They have also provided a press release and some information which I have attached for you to consume as you choose.

The Hon. Peter Walsh has made his views clear and we support them. If you feel frustrated and want to express your concern, we encourage you to write to the following:

Mr Mark Gepp, ALP member for Northern Victoria at mark.gepp@parliament.vic.gov.au

The Hon. Jaclyn Symes, Minister for Regional Development at jaclyn.symes@parliament.vic.gov.au

The Hon Daniel Andrews, Premier, at Daniel.andrews@parliament.vic.gov.au

You could also write to Dr Anne Webster, Federal Member for the Mallee at Anne.Webster.MP@aph.gov.au

Stay safe and well and we hope to see you at one of our venues in the not too distant future.

Greg Roberts - CEO