

VOLUNTEERS THE HEART OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Did you know there could be as many as 35,000 charitable organisations in New Zealand? While some of these will be more active than others (and some will probably be bogus) the point remains that the charitable sector plays an incredibly important role in our country. And it depends on the generosity of many Kiwis who donate money and time to charities each year.

That is why United Future has promoted a review of the tax regime for charitable donations, to recognise better the generosity of donors, and to encourage more people to support the nation's charities. As Minister of Revenue, I have work getting underway later this year on this issue, and am expecting to be able to introduce new policies on tax rebates for charities next year.

At the local level, the annual Northern Wellington Volunteer

Services Awards, established following the International Year of the Volunteer, are a practical way of recognizing the contribution of local community volunteers. I have had the honour of chairing the Awards Committee since its inception, and am very proud of the fact that over the years we have made Awards to over 50 very deserving local people.

Arrangements for the 2006 Northern Wellington Volunteer Services Awards are underway, with nominations now open. To qualify for consideration for an Award a nominee must have completed a minimum of five years voluntary work with a recognized northern suburbs community agency. Full details and nomination can be obtained from my Johnsonville Electorate Office (ph 478 0076). The Awards presentations will be made at a special celebratory dinner in late August.

ELECTORATE OFFICES BUSY

My two electorate offices remain busy dealing with a range of constituent issues. We deal with many matters of concern to people - from immigration cases, to ACC or tax issues, to name the most common ones.

My Johnsonville office is operated by Shirley Simcock and is located at the Johnsonville Community Centre, 3 Frankmoore Avenue, Johnsonville. It is open Monday to Thursday from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, phone 478 0076, or e-mail at electjville@extra.co.nz.

In Lower Hutt, my office is at 66-70 Bloomfield Terrace, Lower Hutt, phone 560 4773, e-mail at huttelectorate@extra.co.nz. Sue Locke is there on Mondays, and Wednesdays to Fridays from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm.

You can contact either office to make an appointment to see me on a Monday morning, or at one of my regular Saturday clinics in either Johnsonville, Newlands, Tawa or Lower Hutt.

Peter Dunne REPORTS

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It is a real privilege for me to have been returned as your MP at last year's General Election. Serving the needs of Ohariu-Belmont and its people remains my top priority in politics.

Whether it be assisting people on an individual basis, or working with our schools and community organisations, or pursuing local infrastructure issues like better transport and roads, as well as dealing with issues of national concern, the welfare and best interests of our area are always uppermost in my mind.

As your local MP, I am here to work for you, no matter what your own political allegiances may be.

I strongly believe in the importance of families and local communities in building a strong country. That is why I have always placed such an emphasis on being part of and working with our local community, and the groups that

make it up. By promoting opportunities for them, and supporting families and individuals achieve well what they do best, we contribute directly to making this a better country.

And nothing has changed in this respect now that I am a Minister again. The work I am doing as Minister of Revenue and Associate Minister of Health is still geared towards making this a better place.

Peter Dunne,
MP for Ohariu-Belmont



INSIDE
*Transmission Gully
Volunteers
United Future's
Priorities
National Medicines
Policy*



UNITED FUTURE NEWS AND VIEWS

To find out more about United Future's policies and what our MPs have been saying, go to the United Future website www.unitedfuture.org.nz.

If you want to contact United Future about any issue our e-mail address is unitedfuture@parliament.govt.nz. We welcome your feedback and comments.



Authorised by Hon Peter Dunne MP, Leader,
United FutureNZ, Parliament Buildings

UNITED FUTURE'S 2005-2008 PRIORITIES

Our agreement with the Labour-led Government after the election means we will be achieving the following key United Future policies, with the government's support:

The Labour-led government has agreed during this term of Parliament to adopt and implement the following broad principles, policies and priorities advanced by United Future.

- No decriminalisation of cannabis for recreational use.
- No limits on freedom of expression through so called "hate speech" laws.
- Making the Families Commission responsible for co-ordinating government support to "third sector" organisations providing parenting education and relationship counselling programmes.
- A new current business taxation regime to ensure better incentives for productivity gains and improved competitiveness with Australia.
- A new tax rebate regime for charities.
- No carbon tax.
- Improved access to student allowances including some reduction in the age at which parental income assessment applies.
- Using appropriate private hospital capacity to reduce waiting lists.
- Reviewing the Prostitution Reform Act to address problems associated with street soliciting, under age involvement and local authority control over brothel zoning.

- Improving public access along rivers lakes and foreshore through negotiated settlements with landowners.
- Stricter controls on water quality and agrarian runoff.
- A new, long term medicines strategy relating to quality pharmaceutical usage in the health sector including the role PHARMAC should play in implementing that strategy.
- A new nationwide pest reduction and game management strategy.
- Making funds available for a highway through Transmission Gully if that is deemed to be the preferred option at the end of the current evaluation programme.
- Publishing a government discussion document on income splitting.

WHY WE NEED A NATIONAL MEDICINES POLICY

Remember the fuss last year over flu vaccines? And asthma inhalers? And the current crisis of herceptin for breast cancer sufferers?

These are just a few examples of where our current approach to the use of pharmaceuticals is failing people. We presently ration the availability of these medicines to people by their price. PHARMAC, the government's drug buying agency, does a good job in making sure we get medicines at the best price, but in the absence of other policies, is increasingly making clinical decisions about the availability of medicines based on

cost-efficiency. In other words, high cost medicines for small groups of patients are often not subsidised (which means they are usually out of people's reach) because they are not deemed to be sufficiently cost efficient.

A national medicines policy, focussing on the quality usage of pharmaceuticals, and taking into account factors other than just the price would mean that a broader approach could be taken to the availability of medicines, meaning a better deal for many patients. Other countries have moved in this direction, which is why United Future has pushed for the

development of such a policy for New Zealand in its agreement with the government. As Associate Health Minister, I now have the responsibility of working on the development of a national medicines strategy for New Zealand.

Our call for a national medicines policy, including a review of the way PHARMAC works, is gathering steam. A recent UMR survey shows that 75% of doctors favour such a review. A similar survey late last year showed that 70% of all New Zealanders want PHARMAC reviewed.

TRANSMISSION GULLY DECISION — AT LAST

After over 60 years a decision on Wellington's proposed Transmission Gully Highway has been made. The Regional Council's review committee heard thousands of submissions on the Western Corridor Plan, with well over 90% supporting Transmission Gully, and rejecting the Coastal Highway option.

Even surveys by Transit New Zealand (no friend of Transmission Gully) showed an overwhelming public preference for Transmission Gully. Even the Wellington City Council has had to grudgingly face reality and swing in behind the Gully route.

The reality is that Transmission Gully now stands on the verge of success as the solution to the Wellington's northern access problems. I want to thank all those individuals and organisations who have worked with and alongside me over the last 15 years on the Transmission Gully campaign.

Your efforts are to be rewarded, and our region will be the better for it. To those who still stand against this decision, I say it is time to move on, and accept the will of the people. This is the time for us to pull together, not tear ourselves apart, and proceed with unity to get Transmission Gully built as quickly as possible.

On a similar note, I was pleased to see the outcome of the recent Greater Wellington Regional Council survey on the Johnsonville line. The fact that local people want to see the trains upgraded and bus services improved should hardly come as a surprise. I was

pleased that there was virtually no support for closing the line down, as some have advocated. However, talk of a further study by the Regional Council worries me. Local people have made their preferences clear — now it is the responsibility of the Regional Council and the Wellington City

Council to make their preferences happen by improving bus and train services, not having yet another study.

