| **Policy Area** | **Problem** | **Policy** | **Simple Framing** |
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| **Healthcare** | Access to healthcare is a serious challenge in Lyne. Many residents struggle to find a local GP who bulk-bills, and some must travel hours to see specialists​. The latest Cleanbill report found no fully bulk-billing medical centers in the Lyne region, creating a “bulk-billing desert” for local patients​.  Rural and regional areas like Lyne face a shortage of doctors and higher out-of-pocket costs. Nationally, only about 60% of patients in rural areas are always bulk-billed, compared to 69% in metropolitan areas | * **A Bulk Billing Medicare Clinic in Taree:** Open a Medicare urgent care clinic in Taree. Employ salaried GPs, nurses, and allied health staff to guarantee bulk-billed consultations over extended opening hours to take pressure off the local hospital emergency department. Based on similar clinics, this would cost $2-3 million to operate. * **Incentives for local Doctors and Nurses:** Provide additional federal incentives to attract and retain healthcare professionals in Lyne. This could look like HECS debt forgiveness for young doctors who serve at least 5 years in rural areas, lower interest rates for essential health and aged care workers relocating to rural areas, and increases to the Workforce Incentive Program payment maximums. We should also make sure GPs are given the same minimum salary and leave entitlements as they would get working in a hospital. * **Medicare for All:** We used to be able to see a GP for free - but years of indexation freezes have meant our local doctors have been forced to charge gap payments just to keep their doors open. The government could cover the out-of-pocket costs of primary care with an additional $950 million per year. I’ll work with stakeholders like RACGP to figure out how to structure a better deal for GP’s so they can focus on what they do best - serving our communities. | “No more ‘doctor deserts’ – healthcare should be available to everyone Lyne.”  We’ll ensure everyone in our community can see a bulk-billing doctor without a long drive or long wait.  We’ll fight to deliver a community clinic, so that people can access the same healthcare as other regional centres.   We’ll get the incentives right to attract and retain more local doctors.  We’ll also argue for broader reforms, like restoring bulk billing for all Australians - not just those with a concession card. |
| **Housing** | We’re bearing the brunt of the government's failure on housing affordability - with more people leaving cities to escape the urban housing market, and driving up prices and rents in our regions.  Locals are being pushed out of the neighbourhoods they grew up in, and we’re finding it harder to close skills shortages in essential services like health and aged care. | * **Unlock investment in Regional Housing:** Support Independent MP Helen Haines proposal for an additional $2 billion to be spent on new housing supply in regional communities. With competitive grants that are open to local councils, developers and social and community housing providers - we can address the shortfall of diverse housing needs to bring down prices. * **Essential Worker Programs:** Extend the government's shared equity scheme, with higher caps on income, and lower interest rates for workers that address identifiable skills shortages in regional areas - such as healthcare, aged care, and key trades. This will create additional incentives for skilled workers to stay in our regions, or move to our regions to ensure full coverage of essential services. |  |
| **Climate Change** | Lyne’s communities are on the front line of climate disasters.  We’ve endured floods and bushfires that devastated homes, farms and businesses.  In 2021 we had record flooding on the Manning River, swamping towns like Taree​. Just a year earlier, the Black Summer bushfires tore through the Mid North Coast. | * **Redirect fossil fuel subsidies:** The Federal government is budgeted to spend $54 billion on fossil fuel subsidies - which is 14x more than the Disaster Ready Fund, and 5.4x the Housing Australia Future Fund. This money doesn’t go towards supporting jobs - it goes straight into the pockets of shareholders and international investors. * **Increase funding for regional jobs, renewables, and climate adaptation:** The latest Climate Council report shows that 10% of all homes in Lyne will become uninsurable due to the ongoing risks of climate change. We need to spend money supporting communities who are already dealing with the damage of climate change, including by investing in jobs and training to support workers into secure and well paid industries. | Protect our community from fires and floods – and build a cleaner future.  I’ll fight for real climate action – more funding for jobs in clean energy to bring power bills down and create a safer future for our kids.  I’ll secure funding to make our region more resilient to floods and fires. |
| **Regional Development** |  | * **Restore Federal funding for local councils to 1% of revenue:** This would inject an additional $18m into our region, ensuring that councils from Port Macquarie to Port Stephens can keep our roads safe, and can support local business grants and programs that keep jobs in our region. * **More mobile black spot base stations:** Lyne has received funding for only 12 black spot base stations - compared with 34 in New England, and 21 in Page. Independents have a track record of winning more grants than the major parties because they focus on local issues - **Helen Haines managed to secure 51 additional base stations for her seat of Indi.** |  |
| **Protecting our Democracy** | The major parties are in the pockets of corporations - with millions in dark donations from big energy companies, big supermarkets and big banks.  As an independent, I’ll fight to “keep the bastards honest” with stronger corruption safeguards, whistleblower protections and donation transparency. | * **Strengthen the National Anti Corruption Commission:** With public hearings on serious cases, expanded powers to investigate across the federal public service and strong whistleblower protections for those who come forward to report wrongdoing. * **Shine a light on corporate influence:** By making ministers diaries public as is done in NSW and QLD, and requiring all political contributions by corporations and all cash-for-access payments to be disclosed, regardless of size. Donations should be disclosed in real-time, including weekly during campaigns. |  |