

8 January 2026

Emily Perry
General Manager, Community and Corporate Affairs
RAA

Dear Ms Perry

RE: SA-BEST response to RAA's 2026 State Election Platform

Thank you for providing me with the RAA's 2026 State Election Platform, and an opportunity to respond. I am sure you will agree that the RAA's willingness to engage with the crossbench of the Upper House in respect of its reform agenda, has resulted in several successful reforms.

The RAA plays a vital and multifaceted role in South Australia that goes well beyond roadside assistance. In many ways, the RAA is one of the state's most dependable institutions, supporting residents' daily lives while contributing to safer, more resilient communities.

My response to your election platform is as follows:

Safer freight routes

SA-BEST recognises that safe major highways and freight routes are essential to the South Australian community and economy.

The RAA is advocating for National Highway upgrades, specifically the duplication of the Augusta Highway between Port Pirie and Crystal Brook, the Sturt Highway between Truro and Nuriootpa and the Dukes Highway between Tailem Bend and Mallee Highway. It has also outlined an approach for progressing an Adelaide Hill Freight Bypass project.

SA-BEST **SUPPORTS** these proposals in principle but acknowledges that in a climate of limited resources, such major and costly infrastructure proposals will need to be prioritised. SA-BEST would be happy to meet with the RAA to understand their views on how the next government might prioritise the proposals they have set out.

Projects of the size and nature of those proposed by the RAA would require careful attention to detail and ongoing monitoring to manage scope creep, financial blowouts, scheduling issues, and community interests. SA-BEST will be the party to hold the next government accountable for the design and implementation of any such significant infrastructure projects.

Safer regional roads

Road safety maintenance

South Australia's regional road accident statistics make for sombre reading. With the condition of the road network being proportional to these statistics, SA-BEST **SUPPORTS** further investment in maintaining our road network and reducing the maintenance backlog. The continued underspending on our roads needs to stop and SA-BEST will advocate for increased and appropriate funding in the next parliament.

Road safety data

SA-BEST is an advocate for transparency in government and cannot identify any reason why road safety data held by government should not be made public. To that end, SA-BEST **SUPPORTS** making the AusRAP data available.

Asset management for councils

Working with local government to prioritise, deliver and maintain South Australian roads should be a priority for the next government. SA-BEST **SUPPORTS** initiatives aimed at managing local government assets required to maintain our road networks.

Road safety upgrades

SA-BEST **SUPPORTS** the development of a Road Safety and Productivity Package Program for the Fleurieu Peninsula.

Safer active transport

SA-BEST gives in principle **SUPPORT** for initiatives designed for safer active transport – and welcomes further consultation on cycling and e-mobility safety infrastructure.

Affordable energy

Energy efficient homes

SA-BEST supports moves to make our homes more energy efficient. However, government programs must be careful not to give rise to unintended consequences.

Whilst SA-BEST acknowledges the advantages of buyers and renters being aware of the energy rating of the house they are about to live in, the cost of producing such a rating would have consequences for the availability and the cost of housing stock – particularly rental availability.

At present, potential buyers of a house can arrange a building inspection at their own cost. Similarly, a potential buyer could choose to conduct an energy rating assessment if such a rating was a factor in a purchasing decision.

Under current tenancy laws and regulations, energy efficiency does not form part of the minimum housing standards. There is room for improvement in this area and SA-BEST would support further exploration of how the next government might do this. However, SA-

BEST DOES NOT CURRENTLY SUPPORT compulsory energy ratings for all housing stock for purchase or rental.

EV-ready homes

SA-BEST acknowledges the value in new home builds having the necessary infrastructure to charge an electric vehicle. However, in the interests of consistency across borders, SA-BEST believes this would be better addressed at a national level. Hence, SA-BEST **DOES NOT SUPPORT** this reform now.

Vehicle to home charging

SA-BEST acknowledges the merits of establishing government programs and grants aimed at encouraging the uptake of bi-directional chargers. However, given the relatively small market for a program such as this, SA-BEST will not actively advocate for the program at this point but would keen to revisit it in the future, when the market would be more substantial. SA-BEST **DOES NOT CURRENTLY SUPPORT** this submission.

Circular economy

SA-BEST strongly **SUPPORTS** the establishment of a large-scale resource recovery and advanced recycling facility in South Australia. As a global leader in the adoption of clean energy technologies, South Australia should also be a leader in dealing with the waste that results from such technologies and the production of clean energy. A facility of this nature would also have significant economic benefits for South Australia.

Cleaner transport

With transport being the primary source of greenhouse gas emissions in South Australia, SA-BEST supports initiatives aimed at reducing emissions into the future.

Public EV charging

SA-BEST **SUPPORTS** the establishment of government incentive schemes and grants aimed at increasing access to public EV charging infrastructure.

Electric public transport

SA-BEST **SUPPORTS** the transition of South Australia's public bus fleet to electric buses subject to any practical limitations identified by government.

Sustainable communities

The occurrence of natural disasters is becoming more frequent. If we know these events are going to occur, it would be irresponsible for governments not to prepare for them.

Disaster mitigation fund

The State Government works collaboratively with the Federal Government (through the Commonwealth Disaster Ready Fund) to roll out measures aimed at mitigating the effect of

natural disasters. The current arrangement, which includes matched funding or in-kind contributions, is in place until 2028-29.

SA-BEST has a particular interest in how we prepare for and respond to natural events that can devastate communities, businesses and in fact, entire industries. In the recent review of the *Emergency Management Act*, I successfully moved an amendment to section 5A of the Bill during the committee stage. The amendment mandated that the State Emergency Management Plan must include strategies relating to emergencies that cause, or threaten to cause, damage to marine environments, including marine flora and fauna. This change was explicitly driven by the algal bloom crisis. It was argued that while the existing framework covered floods and bushfires, there was ambiguity regarding marine biological disasters. The amendment ensured that future events like the algal bloom would be treated as natural disasters under the state's emergency framework.

SA-BEST **SUPPORTS** the creation of a longer-term disaster mitigation fund before the expiry of the current arrangements.

Data driven planning

Planning and decision making by government should always be data and evidence driven.

The State Government has invested in updating South Australia's bushfire hazard mapping and planning rules to inform decision making, and SA-BEST **SUPPORTS** that a similar project be undertaken in respect of flood hazard mapping and code amendments.

Safer and more resilient homes

Building more climate resilient homes is an aspiration that SA-BEST supports. However, conversations about what can be achieved and how, need to take place with all relevant stakeholders at the table.

Modern public transport

South Australia under utilises its public transport network because it is not convenient in terms of its coverage and cost. Improving the network, with the aim of increasing its usage and reducing road traffic, is something that SA-BEST strongly supports.

Passenger rail expansion

SA-BEST **SUPPORTS** the development of rail network masterplan to support housing growth and to reduce congestion on our roads. Indeed SA-BEST has supported government initiatives to unlock land on the condition that appropriate infrastructure, including transport, is considered.

On demand bus services

SA-BEST **SUPPORTS** the establishment of a trial of on demand bus services in Goolwa, Victor Harbor, and parts of the Adelaide Hills.

Bus network improvements and metro boundary expansion

SA-BEST **SUPPORTS** the exploration of options to increase the frequency and reliability of key Adelaide Metro bus routes.

Public transport fares

In recognition that flexible workplace arrangements have changed the way people utilise public transport, SA-BEST **SUPPORTS** the introduction of new metroCARD fares aimed at providing more flexible options.

Regional Public Transport Fund

Public Transport options for regional communities are limited. The State Government should work with local councils to explore and develop services for their communities. SA-BEST would **SUPPORT** an initiative of this nature.

Reduced congestion

The RAA are proposing several road infrastructure upgrades aimed at supporting housing growth and reducing congestion, which include:

- Curtis Road duplication
- An overpass at the intersection of Port Wakefield Road and Riverlea
- A third lane of the Main North Road between Montague Road and Kesters Road
- A third lane of Main South Road between the Southern Expressway and the Onkaparinga River
- Planning for a third lane on the South Eastern Freeway between Crafers and Verdun

All of the proposed upgrades have merit, and SA-BEST provides in principle **SUPPORT** for each of them. However, as previously stated, in a climate of limited resources, significant and costly projects will need to be prioritised. SA-BEST would welcome the opportunity to discuss priorities with the RAA.

Lower cost of living

Fuel price transparency

SA-BEST has always backed the RAA's calls for full transparency in respect of fuel pricing and will continue to do so. SA-BEST **SUPPORTS** this initiative.

Transport affordability

SA-BEST **SUPPORTS** practical and achievable measures to keep transport costs affordable.

Fair and equitable road user charge

With the introduction and uptake of electric vehicles, equity issues in respect of which road users pay for road projects and maintenance, has arisen. Currently, fuel excise is used to fund these requirements. However, we need a consistent national approach to solving this issue, especially given the two major parties in this state have opposing views. As you know the former Marshall government introduced laws aimed at sharing the burden of these costs, and the Malinauskas government repealed them.

Accessible driving lessons

I have addressed the need for accessible driving lessons in several contexts, focusing on financial barriers, disability support, and regional access.

During the debate on the Motor Vehicles (Motor Driving Instructors and Authorised Examiners) Amendment Bill 2024, I raised concerns over the prohibitive cost of driver education for many families and asked the Minister to highlight programs available to support those unable to afford these services. I also sought assurances that specific provisions for individuals with special needs, would be addressed through regulations.

In addition, I have asked the government to confirm the continuation of subsidy schemes designed to make licensing affordable, particularly the “On the Right Track” program, which assists people in the APY lands.

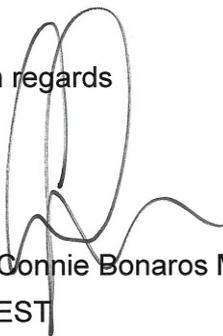
SA-BEST **SUPPORTS** initiative aimed at making driving lessons affordable.

A stronger tourism economy

SA-BEST acknowledges the good work of the RAA in promoting South Australia as a tourism destination. If re-elected to the Parliament, I look forward to having further conversations with the RAA about how we might best **SUPPORT** their efforts to highlight South Australian tourism destination.

Thank you once again for your willingness to engage with the Crossbench. I appreciate any support the RAA can offer.

Warm regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Connie Bonaros', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Hon. Connie Bonaros MLC
SA-BEST