



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Peak body welcomes Labor's commitment to the not-for-profit sector**

Philanthropy Australia welcomes today's announcement of a comprehensive not-for-profit sector policy agenda by the Australian Labor Party.

Philanthropy Australia CEO, Sarah Davies, said these commitments align closely with the organisation's recently released 'Policy Priorities for a More Giving Australia'.

"Australia's not-for-profit sector is focused on making Australia a more inclusive society, assisting those in need, promoting culture, protecting our environment and making a difference in so many other areas," Ms Davies said.

"Philanthropy, which is the use of private wealth for public benefit, plays a vital role in supporting the diverse, vibrant and innovative not-for-profits that strengthen the social capital in communities right across our nation.

"It's important to have the policies in place to support the work of the not-for-profit sector, including philanthropy, and that's why we applaud these commitments from the Australian Labor Party," she said.

The announcement includes commitments to:

- Establish an advisory body to oversee the preparation of a not-for-profit sector development plan
- Prioritise reforms to fix fundraising regulation in Australia
- Enshrine protections for not-for-profit advocacy in legislation
- Provide resources to once again prepare a comprehensive Annual Charities Report
- Enhance ACNC governance arrangements

Philanthropy Australia recognises the Hon Dr Andrew Leigh MP's leadership and commitment to the not for profit sector. As the Shadow Minister for Charities and Not-for-Profits over the last three years we acknowledge his strong engagement with Philanthropy Australia and other stakeholders from the charitable sector.

Ms Davies said the commitment to establish an advisory body to oversee the preparation of a not-for-profit sector development plan is a unique opportunity to identify the strategic challenges and opportunities for the sector and set out an agenda for how we can work with government to enhance our impact.

"Philanthropy is increasingly funding advocacy in Australia, and the proposal to enshrine new protections for not-for-profit advocacy is an important step in creating an environment

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where advocacy by charities isn't just tolerated by government but is actively valued and supported as essential to a strong civil society.

"When it comes to reforming fundraising regulation in Australia, the time for talk is over, so it's great to see a commitment to immediately start the reform process should the Australian Labor Party win the election," Ms Davies said.

Philanthropy Australia also welcomes the commitment to provide resources for the ACNC to continue to commission the comprehensive Annual Charities Report which analyses data on charities in Australia provided to the ACNC. The ACNC previously commissioned these reports on an annual basis, however the decision was made to discontinue this work under the current ACNC Commissioner.

"The ACNC has a vast amount of data on charities in Australia and the 'Australian Charities Report' it previously commissioned were a highly valuable resource for donors and other stakeholders, and the decision to no longer release them was disappointing," Ms Davies said.

"Philanthropy Australia is pleased to see the Australian Labor Party's commitment to provide resources for comprehensive reports to again be produced in order to analyse and share the vast amount of data the ACNC holds.

"Philanthropy Australia is very supportive of the ACNC and the important role it plays, and we believe that the commitment to strengthen the role and powers of the ACNC Advisory Board will help ensure it is an effective and responsive regulator," Ms Davies said.

Philanthropy Australia has shared its 'Policy Priorities for a More Giving Australia' with our political leaders and elected representatives during the Federal Election, and it has valued the positive engagement it has had with Government and Opposition. This has included roundtable meetings with the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, the Minister for Social Services from the Liberal Party, and with the Hon Dr Andrew Leigh MP, the Shadow Assistant Treasurer and Shadow Minister for Charities and Not-for-profits, from the Australian Labor Party.

**-ENDS-**

As the peak body for giving, Philanthropy Australia uses the collective voice of the hundreds of funders, social investors, for-purpose organisations and change agents that comprise its membership community to advocate for policy and regulatory environments that enable more philanthropy with impact in Australia.

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