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Natalie Hutchins MP
 STATE MEMBER FOR SYDENHAM

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*Com. supports
 6/2/2018*

Cr Bob Turner
 Mayor of Melton City Council
 PO Box 21
 Melton VIC 3337



16/05/2018

Dear Cr Turner,

Re: Funding for Neighbourhood Houses across Victoria

Thank you for your recent letter relating to Victorian government support for Neighbourhood Houses.

The Andrews State Government is backing our neighbourhood houses as we want to ensure more Victorians have access to the vital employment, training and volunteering services that many neighbourhood houses provide in local communities across Victoria.

I note that Melton South Community Centre actually receives the maximum possible funding allocation of 40 hours per week through the Neighbourhood Houses Coordination Program (NHCP).

The Andrews State Government recognises the important role that neighbourhood houses play as places of inclusion and in providing education and training pathways, and opportunities for volunteering in local communities. That is why the *Victorian Budget 2018/2019* invests a further \$21.8 million across the neighbourhood house network. This is the biggest funding boost to neighbourhood house coordination hours ever, with an extra 76,700 hours to be delivered each year to more houses across the state.

Eligible neighbourhood houses currently funded less than 25 hours per week through the neighbourhood house coordination program have been invited to participate in an expression of interest process to increase their coordination hours to 25 hours per week. Further, currently un-funded neighbourhood houses and local governments will

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soon be invited to apply for funding of up to 25 coordination hours per week through the neighbourhood house coordination program.

This funding boost builds on the more than \$30 million per annum the Andrews Government already provides to support 375 neighbourhood houses, 16 neighbourhood house networks and the peak body, Neighbourhood Houses Victoria.

The Labor Government's record investment in neighbourhood houses is almost eight times more than what was delivered under the previous Liberal Government.

Furthermore, Labor's record investment is in stark contrast to the Turnbull Federal Government who are slashing the occasional childcare program, which will potentially leave more than 50 neighbourhood houses stripped of funding from July 1 this year. For your information, I have attached a relevant Victorian Government media release to this letter.

The Victorian Labor Government will continue to work with the neighbourhood house sector on the issues they are facing.

Thank you again for writing to me about this important community resource.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Natalie Hutchins'.

Hon Natalie Hutchins MP
Member for Sydenham

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