

Keep putting locals first



Pictured: Federal Member for Gippsland Darren Chester and State Member for Morwell Russell Northe discussing local business issues with Leanne and Rob Mizzi from Genertech. Mr Chester said Genertech is an outstanding Latrobe Valley business which is servicing local clients and major mining companies throughout Australia. "By putting locals first and shopping locally or hiring local firms, we can all do our bit to create jobs for young people in the Latrobe Valley," Mr Chester said.

Valley jobs at risk with new Rudd Tax

JOBS in the Latrobe Valley will be put at risk if the Rudd Government proceeds with its proposed new tax on mining, according to The Nationals Member for Gippsland Darren Chester.

Mr Chester has met with small business owners across the region who are concerned that they will lose contracts to supply services in mining towns if the new mining tax is introduced.



"Major investments are being put on hold and jobs are at stake in every part of Australia, not just the mining towns in Queensland and Western Australia," Mr Chester said.

"There are many businesses in our region which supply specialist services to the mining industry and there are workers flying back and forth across the country on a daily basis.

"It makes no sense to undermine the financial strength of one of our most successful industries and risk sending jobs overseas to countries which won't have such a high tax rate on mining companies."

Mr Chester has also criticised the Labor Government's \$38 million taxpayer-funded advertising campaign.

"The Labor Party used to stand up for workers. Now

Labor is attempting to introduce a new tax on mining without revealing how it will affect workers in regional communities like the Latrobe Valley," Mr Chester said.

"If it was such a good idea for Australia, why does the Prime Minister need to waste \$38 million of taxpayers' money on an advertising campaign? It's about time that all sides of politics agreed to ban such advertising unless there is a genuine community need, administered by an independent authority such as the Auditor General."

Mr Chester said he was also concerned by the negative impacts the proposed new mining tax has already had on the community.

"The Rudd Government has failed to recognise that millions of Australians already benefit from the mining sector through their share portfolios and superannuation funds," Mr Chester said.

"Self-funded retirees have already seen their income diminish by the global financial crisis and the current drop in share prices, which is related to the new mining tax, is another reason why Kevin Rudd's plans should be strongly opposed."

Mr Chester has urged local businesses to contact his office with their concerns over the new mining tax.

Anybody wishing to pass on their concerns can contact Mr Chester's office on 1300 131 785 or go online at www.darrenchester.com.au

Traralgon Marathon success

FEDERAL Member for Gippsland Darren Chester has taken a new approach to the term 'running for office' by competing in the annual Traralgon Marathon.

It was the first time the local MP had contested the event which was commemorating its 43rd year.

"The Traralgon Marathon is a prestigious event and I enjoyed the challenge of competing in Australia's oldest marathon festival," Darren said.

"The volunteers from the Traralgon Harriers Athletics Club did a great job to organise the event and it attracted runners from across Victoria and beyond.

"Like a lot of social runners, my main aim was to simply finish the 42 kilometre event and I made it across the line in 3hrs 55mins."

Darren took up marathon running four years ago as a way to stay fit after retiring from competitive sport.

"It's important to encourage people of all ages to remain active throughout their lives and there's a role for governments to provide facilities and infrastructure to make that happen," he said.

"Community playgrounds, walking tracks, cycling trails and other sporting facilities are all important projects with preventative health benefits."



Pictured: Federal Member for Gippsland Darren Chester was joined in the last 50 metres of the Traralgon Marathon by his two sons, Lachlan and Clancy