



Andrew Barr MLA

CHIEF MINISTER

TREASURER

MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MINISTER FOR URBAN RENEWAL

MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND EVENTS

MEMBER FOR MOLONGLO

Dear Ms Fischer

Thank you for your letter of 18 May 2015 about the importance of the Department of Immigration and Border Protection remaining located within Belconnen.

I share your concern about the possible adverse consequences of any Commonwealth Government moves to relocate Australian Public Service employees from the Belconnen Town Centre. I understand the importance of public sector jobs to Belconnen's local economy and my government is committed to ensuring it remains a strong and vibrant town centre. My government and I have made numerous representations to the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, the Hon Peter Dutton MP, and Secretary of the Department, Mr Michael Pezullo, seeking discussions on this matter. I also wrote directly to Minister Dutton about this issue on 17 March 2015.

On 11 February 2015 a motion was also brought forward by Ginninderra MLA Dr Chris Bourke and passed by the Legislative Assembly clearly outlining the ACT's position. It was resolved that the Assembly:

- (1) notes:
 - (a) the significant investment made by the ACT Government into Belconnen over many years;
 - (b) the importance of Commonwealth public agencies located in Belconnen which are an important part of the local Belconnen community and economy;
 - (c) the uncertainty over future Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Border Protection in the Belconnen town centre; and
 - (d) that many Belconnen based small businesses would be severely disadvantaged if the department was relocated away from Belconnen;
- (2) declares its wish for the Commonwealth Government departments to maintain their central offices in Canberra as a first priority; and

ACT LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY


- (3) calls on the Speaker to convey the Assembly's strong request to the Federal Government to keep the Department of Immigration and Border Protection in Belconnen.

The Commonwealth Government is currently undertaking a review of the National Capital Plan and I understand an exposure draft will be released next month. We are looking forward to working closely with the Commonwealth Government in the consultative process and beyond to ensure the best results for Canberra.

I encourage you to raise these concerns with the National Capital Authority during their stakeholder consultations by registering your interest in these consultations at www.nationalcapital.gov.au.

I also suggest you support the work of the Belconnen Community Council, which is leading local efforts to ensure the Australian Public Service maintains a strong presence in Belconnen. The ACT Government will continue to convey our strong desire for the Department of Immigration and Border Protection to remain in the Belconnen Town Centre.

Yours sincerely


Andrew Barr MLA
Chief Minister

30 JUN 2015