

2.2 MONASH YOUTH COMMITTEE MEETING WITH MEMBERS OF STATE AND FEDERAL PARLIAMENT ADVOCACY ENDORSEMENT

Responsible Director: Russell Hopkins

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Notes the importance of the issues raised by the Monash Youth Committee (MYC) on behalf of their peers in the City of Monash.*
- 2. Notes the issues, highlighted by MYC that are impacting Monash young people are either a State or Federal Government responsibility.*
- 3. Endorses the letter written by members of the MYC to be sent to the following:*

Federal Representatives:

Gladys Liu MP, Katie Allen MP and Clare O'Neil MP.

State Representatives:

Daniel Andrews MP, Neil Angus MP, Steve Dimopoulos MP, Meng Heang Tak MP, Matt Fregon MP and Will Fowles MP.

State Legislative Council Members:

Bruce Atkinson MP, Shaun Leane MP, Georgie Crozier MP, Enver Erdogan MP, Dr Tien Kieu MP, Gordon Rich-Phillips MP

INTRODUCTION

The Monash Youth Committee (MYC) are wanting to ensure that Monash young people's views and needs are at the forefront of both State and Federal Members of Parliament leading into the upcoming election period.

The MYC are seeking endorsement to send a letter requesting to meet with both State and Federal Members of Parliament who represent parts of the City of Monash. With both State and Federal elections to be held in 2022, the MYC has prioritised the importance of meeting with representatives to discuss what each level of government is currently undertaking to support young people in the community. Furthermore, the MYC would like the opportunity to raise a number of key issues or policy decisions currently impacting Monash young people.

The MYC has drafted two letters, which are attached to this report, for Council endorsement. One letter is for Federal Members of Parliament (Attachment 1) and the other for State Members of Parliament (Attachment 2). Each letter identifies issues or concerns with policy related to that level of government.

The MYC is seeking endorsement to send the attached letters to State and Federal Members of Parliament that cover the City of Monash as this is an issue of policy direction rather than party politics. MYC wishes to send a letter to the following:

Federal Representatives:

Gladys Liu MP, Katie Allen and Clare O'Neil MP.

State Representatives:

Daniel Andrews MP, Neil Angus MP, Steve Dimopoulos MP, Meng Heang Tak MP, Matt Fregon MP and Will Fowles MP.

State Legislative Council Members:

Bruce Atkinson MP, Shaun Leane MP, Georgie Crozier MP, Enver Erdogan MP, Dr Tien Kieu MP, Gordon Rich-Phillips MP

BACKGROUND

The MYC is a group of young people who come together to share ideas, opinions and discuss needs of all young people. The aim of the group is to be the voice and inspiration of young people in Monash. As such, the group strives to represent the views of young people in Monash to all levels of Government.

DISCUSSION

The MYC has a range of issues they wish to discuss with Federal Members of Parliament including:

Fair Work Amendment (Supporting Australia's Jobs and Economic Recovery) Bill 2021.

- The MYC are concerned that the current suggested amendments will directly impact young people negatively. The Bill will allow the removal of weekend penalty rates for part time workers who work sixteen hours or more a week (40% of young people engaged in either casual or part-time work) and also allows employers impacted by COVID to reduce wages to employees over the next two years.

The MYC supports a wage increase for young people under the age of 21 years to ensure young people are not living below the poverty line.

Impacts of recent amendment to the Higher Education Support Amendment (Job-Ready Graduates and Supporting Regional and Remote Students) Bill 2020:

- Is this policy initiative ineffective and detrimental to young people?
- Early figures are indicating that Arts degrees are more popular than in 2020 even though there has been a 113% increase in fees. There has been a 10% increase in enrolment in Arts degrees in Sydney and a 5% increase in Melbourne.
- The Education Minister promised that the amendment would not impact current students. This is not the case as students enrolled before 2021 are being charged significantly more by universities when they seek to adjust their degrees or drop one of their courses in a double degree.

Treasury Laws Amendment (Your Future, Your Super) Bill 2021.

- The MYC wants young people to be able to have flexibility to move between superannuation funds and not be 'stapled' to the one fund their entire career.

With State Government Members of Parliament, they wish to discuss the following issues:

Victorian Government's electric vehicle policy.

- The MYC would like the State Government to reconsider the 2.5 cent a kilometre Levy as they believe this is a disincentive.
- Strongly supports the Victorian Government's Secure Work Pilot Scheme where casual workers can access up to five days of sick leave or carer's leave annually. MYC is keen to have bipartisan support for this initiative in the future.
- Housing Affordability First Home Buyer Schemes do not appear to be having a meaningful impact, with many young Australians still living with their parents. The Government needs to explore other ways to help those buying their first homes whether that be improved housing policy or better first home buyer schemes.
- The MYC would like to see financial literacy embedded in the secondary school curriculum so that young people are more equipped to navigate the increasing complex and changing financial world where Afterpay, Beforepay, short term loans, digital currency (e.g. Bitcoin) and investing are promoted and accessible to young people once they turn 18.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The MYC is looking to address a broad range of topics with their local members of parliament that impact young people both directly or indirectly. MYC wants to ensure that young people, many of whom are not yet eligible

to vote, are provided with the same social consideration as other sections of the community.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

A Healthy and Resilient Monash: Integrated Plan 2017-2021 identifies the need to have a community that is fair to all and the importance of freedom of choice. *Monash Council has a strong commitment to Access and Equity*, which is guided by the broad principles of International Human Rights and Social Justice.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

CONCLUSION

The MYC feels that it is important that there is ongoing dialogue between young people and policymakers so that young people's views are adequately considered and represented at both State and Federal levels of government. The MYC feels that both levels of government need to be more proactive in creating policies that promote more effective outcomes for young people with particular consideration in the areas of employment and education.

The MYC requests that Council endorses the letter written by members of the MYC to be sent to the following Federal Representatives (Attachment 1): Gladys Liu MP, Katie Allen and Clare O'Neil MP as well as the letter for State Representatives (Attachment 2): Daniel Andrews MP, Neil Angus MP, Steve Dimopoulos MP, Meng Heang Tak MP, Matt Fregon MP and Will Fowles MP; and State Legislative Council Members Bruce Atkinson MP, Shaun Leane MP, Georgie Crozier MP, Enver Erdogan MP, Dr Tien Kieu MP, Gordon Rich-Phillips MP