



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

23 JULY 2024

Democracy on the move: NSW Parliament's Regional Roadshow comes to Wagga Wagga

The Parliament of NSW is hitting the road throughout 2024 to share the work of the NSW Legislative Council during its Bicentenary year. Wagga Wagga has been chosen as one of six regional centres across the state to host a special outreach roadshow on 31 July and 1 August.

Headlining the roadshow is a series of free community workshops on 1 August, on all things democracy, representation and participation in NSW. From how laws are made, to the committee inquiries into issues affecting communities across the state, participants will learn the surprising ins-and-outs of Parliament from the very people who keep the wheels turning at the Legislative Council.

In recognition of the strong public sector presence in Wagga Wagga and surrounds, government employees will have the opportunity to enrol in a half day 'Legislative Council in Practice' seminar on 1 August. This covers practical information on how the Legislative Council exercises its functions as a 'House of Review'. The seminar will feature a panel discussion with current members of the Legislative Council.

The roadshow includes a public speaking competition for senior school students and a youth forum on 31 July. Workshops will also be run at selected local schools. This suite of events will provide the region's young people with the valuable networks and platform to support them as future leaders and as a voice for their community.

President of the Legislative Council, Ben Franklin MLC, said that this year's Bicentenary of the Legislative Council – Australia's very first legislature – presents a fantastic opportunity to engage regional communities in forging democracy's future in NSW.

"Our vibrant regions are the heart and soul of democracy in NSW, whether through councils, schools, community groups, small businesses or youth organisations," Mr Franklin said.

"With this special community event, we hope to show the Wagga Wagga and broader Riverina community the many opportunities for their voices to be part of the democratic process beyond voting."

The free community workshops will be held on Thursday 1 August at Wagga Wagga Civic Centre. Various session times are available, with each workshop running for 1 hour. Bookings can be made here: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/926326115347>

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Please get in touch for filming/photography requests or to request interviews with Mr Franklin (remote interviews beforehand, with in-person interviews available during the roadshow).

Media gallery/resources:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/pi8c7aoo9m29v7r1modqu/AHWvNmp6EjMMtvoWLPejKJI?rlkey=q4hzva1bobdgcfrt7uypdgt3p&st=yhwc70vj&dl=0>

ADDITIONAL QUOTES FOR MEDIA USE

Dr Joe McGirr MP, Member for Wagga Wagga:

“The recognition of this milestone in the history of Australian government is an excellent opportunity to reflect on what has been achieved to the present, learn from what we could have done better in the past, and work together to build a bright future for new generations.

“I encourage the Wagga Wagga community to observe the Bicentenary by taking advantage of the community workshops on offer and to continue to participate in our democratic institutions so that we can all have a say in the future of the state and the nation.”

President of the Legislative Council, Ben Franklin MLC:

Public Speaking Competition

“As part of NSW Parliament’s Wagga Wagga Roadshow, we’re inviting high school students from Wagga Wagga and neighbouring communities to participate in a public speaking competition on 31 July. Investing in the future of our democracy means empowering young people in their leadership journey by equipping them with the platform and networks so they can be a voice for their community.”

Youth Forum

“NSW Parliament’s Wagga Wagga Youth Forum will bring together bright minds from schools in Wagga Wagga and neighbouring communities for a crucial and inspiring discussion on issues such as leadership, effective representation and their vision for a parliamentary democracy of the future. As the NSW Legislative Council looks towards its next 200 years, it’s important to listen to tomorrow’s leaders about issues that concern them.’

Workshops

“Democracy is much more than voting once every four years. There are so many ways people living in regional NSW can get involved in the democratic process and have their voice heard. Parliament can seem like a distant place from regional areas. With these workshops, we want to break down that barrier to allow people in the regions to better understand their parliamentary institutions and discover the opportunities for participating in our state’s robust and vibrant democracy as we celebrate 200 years of the Legislative Council – Australia’s oldest Parliament.”