



Chester Borrows MP FOR WHANGANUI



National

SPRING NEWSLETTER

CHECKING IN WITH CHESTER.....

The last few months have kept me exceptionally busy, both in Parliament and in the electorate.

I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to travel overseas at the end of May, on behalf of Corrections Minister Hon Judith Collins. I visited London, Northern Ireland, Belgium and the United States to examine what they were doing in terms of **rehabilitating prisoners**. The trip was a real insight and I've just finished my report back.

We have had several **Ministerial visits to the electorate**, most recently from Minister of Agriculture, Hon David Carter, and Minister of Labour, Hon Kate Wilkinson. It's always good to have Ministers visit the electorate so they have the opportunity to meet with local businesses, attend events and get a sense of what current issues are.



Chester and Minister Kate Wilkinson visit the Affco meat plant (photo courtesy of the Wanganui Chronicle)

Adult and community education (ACE) has been the subject of many emails and comments lately. There has been a lot of misleading information about this issue, with Labour trying to argue that \$152 million is being removed from the education budget, when the truth is that \$67 million is being diverted into other education funding. As we are all feeling the resounding repercussions of the world-wide recession, coupled with

the level of debt accrued by Labour, we have had to readjust our priorities. The Government will continue to provide \$124 million over the next four years to ACE, however, it will be targeted to the priorities of literacy, numeracy and foundation skills. In other words we are focusing on and investing in those courses equipping people with the skills and opportunity to find work or pursue further study.

We saw **the return of the 'smacking' debate** with the people of Whanganui turned out to vote in higher than average numbers - at 60%, and they voted overwhelmingly "no" to the question at 92%. In the end the question is: "how is the law working?" Well, the law is working pretty much as it would have worked had National got the numbers together to pass my amendment. I understand the concern that a large proportion of the public has expressed over this issue, however the Prime Minister has announced that the Government is introducing safeguards to give parents comfort they will not be criminalised for lightly smacking their children. However it is important to note that the law is being enforced in exactly the same way as it would be if my amendment had been passed in 2007, in other words if the petitioners had the maw the way they wanted it.

Buyers beware! It has come to the attention of my Wanganui office that a vehicle manufacturer will only certify a vehicle to the standards that are required for the vehicles intended market. For a number of years New Zealand has required compliance with a greater number of standards than Singapore for example. Vehicles that are currently operating on New Zealand roads must have passed through the entry certification process and as such have been able to prove compliance with the necessary standards required at the time. Whilst a vehicle may outwardly appear to be similar to a compliant vehicle and may have even been produced in the same factory, this does not prove compliance with the New Zealand requirements nor does the fact that the vehicle has been operated on the road in another country. As there is no way of retrospectively certifying components of a mass produced vehicle this documentation is required from the time the vehicle was manufactured. Some may be able to prove their compliance via standards markings that will appear on the individual components. For the remaining components NZTA will need to see documentation from the vehicle manufacture to prove compliance.

The National-led Government inherited a **public health system** with significant staffing, service and financial problems. The health budget doubled in nine years, but there was little improvement in services. National is committed to delivering better, sooner, more convenient healthcare for you and your family. To do this, we're building a strong and enduring public health system based on need.

I recently found myself at the centre of a huge debate surrounding **Hawera Hospital** after rumours and concerns voiced in the South Taranaki community over the proposed move of the Emergency Department (ED) into the medical ward at Hawera Hospital. Myself, Mayor Ross Dunlop and a group of health and hospital activists met with TDHB CEO Tony Foulkes and Hospital Services General Manager Joy Farley. We got a number of assurances at the meeting, including flexibility regarding the beds in Hawera Hospital which can be used for medical, maternity and emergency use, so even if the medical ward is full at night, emergencies will be handled in Hawera by using the Emergency Department. The notional configuration of maternity, ED, and medical beds will not hinder South Taranaki people returning to Hawera for recuperation from care in Base hospital and the decision as to location will always be based on what is best for the patient with a preference for South Taranaki people to be located in the Hawera Hospital. All duty doctors at Hawera Hospital providing ED services will still have ED experience so they will be able to assess those patients presenting to Hawera in emergency situations before be moved to New Plymouth if that is required. No medical staff will lose their jobs although some staff will have medical ward duties parallel with their ED work. There is a review of other services such as booking and outpatients which may well result in some change but there may be a need for continuing booking co-ordination from Hawera and there is an acknowledgement that there needs to be a 'Hawera stream' for bookings to take account of the circumstances of South and Central Taranaki patients. Operating the ED service from the medical ward at night will mean there will need to be provision to deal with usual sudden spikes of demand for emergency services when they arise. There was an assurance that this will still be handled by TDHB.

Participating in the **Parliamentary rugby team** has been a recent challenge for me too, with a July match in Rotorua which helped raise money for a good cause (Diabetes New Zealand). The auction dinner the night before the game raised about \$12,000 and MP's services were auctioned off. Sport is really important for children. It's a great way to exercise and it teaches valuable teamwork, leadership and fair play skills.

Encouraging young New Zealanders to get involved in sport when they're at school can lead to a lifetime of involvement – and a future generation of fitter, healthier Kiwis. Our Kiwisport initiative answers calls from schools, clubs, and regional sports trusts for greater support and investment in sport for children. It delivers \$82 million over the next four years directly to the frontline.



(that's me on the far right!)

I was pleased at the recent announcements by our Finance Minister Bill English that current super levels were budgeted for in all of the Government's projections through to 2023 and would not be affected by the suspension of super fund payments. Our National Government is **committed to keeping existing Superannuation entitlements**. New Zealand Superannuation will continue to be based on 66% of the after-tax average wage, paid from age 65.

I am always pleased to hear from my constituents, to welcome school visits to Parliament and to support local initiatives wherever I can. So – if you'd like to get in touch then **please feel free to contact me**. Remember to keep your eye out for my weekly column which is published in the Wanganui Chronicle and the South Taranaki Star. You can also access these at www.borrows.co.nz

Upcoming events.....

September sees the opening of the Festival of Glass and the Literary Festival at UCOL, which will be attended by **Hon. Christopher Finlayson..... Minister for Conservation, Hon. Tim Groser**, is due to visit the electorate in October... We will also be welcoming the **Prime Minister Hon. John Key** to Hawera in October, for the launch of the Big Brothers, Big Sisters mentoring initiative, a visit to Pariroa Marae, and also to Wanganui.....

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