

**5 May 2025**

**Election outcome brings hope for confidence and continuity**

Business Hunter has congratulated Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and local MPs on their re-election, with CEO Bob Hawes saying he hoped the majority outcome would give the new government scope to deliver the policy certainty craved by business, investors and the community.

“The Hunter region is poised to step up as a regional powerhouse but needs to have confidence in our investment environment and economic pathway in order to move forward,” Mr Hawes said.

“The big-picture issues of the campaign – such as energy, housing and defence – loom large in the Hunter.

“We have great strength in both traditional and renewable energy sectors and stand ready to lead the nation into the Net Zero economy.

“It is time for the major parties to stop playing politics with energy policy and we hope the new term will bring a bipartisan approach to what is arguably the most pressing issue facing our country.”

Mr Hawes said this campaign did not see many funding handouts for major regional projects – with the main exception being the matched commitment to spend \$100 million on the westbound flyover for the Maitland roundabout.

“This was very much a grassroots election campaign, with a focus on cost-of-living initiatives and funding for community-based infrastructure such as sporting facility upgrades,” Mr Hawes said.

“But major investment is still required for projects such as the John Hunter Hospital Stage 2 development, freight rail bypass and enabling infrastructure for housing, and we will continue to advocate for these regional priorities.

“High Speed Rail remains on the agenda and we also hope the election result will give offshore wind proponents the confidence to move forward with feasibility studies, as this is another project with potential to be economically transformative for the region.”

Mr Hawes said the business community urged the new government to deliver on key promises for small and medium businesses.

Key priorities from this campaign included extending the instant asset write-off, cutting red tape, ensuring labour flexibility and completing key infrastructure promises.

“Australia needs a growth agenda to keep our communities prosperous,” Mr Hawes said.

“With global uncertainties causing market volatility around the world, it is more important than ever that government policy supports domestic growth and stability.

“Insurance costs, taxes, wages and energy are the top four cost pressures for small businesses right now and skills shortages and red tape also pose immense challenges.

“We will continue to work with the federal Labor government and our regional MPs on these key issues.”

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