Summary of oral submission - Ellen Sandell MP

Agreed summary of oral submission to the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal forthcoming Members of Parliament (Victoria) salaries and allowances annual adjustment Determination 2024

Ellen Sandell MP, State Member for Melbourne, Victorian Greens

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Salary and wages policy

- MP salaries should never exceed the public sector wage cap (currently 3 per cent), MPs should not receive pay increases that far outweigh those of nurses, teachers, and other public sector workers.
- Any decision on MP salaries should also factor in that the Government's public sector wage cap has been at very low levels (1.5%) for a long time, and therefore MPs should not receive salary increases when other public sector workers have not received fair increases over this time.

Electorate office and communications budget and resourcing for crossbench MPs

- Crossbench MPs face significant challenges in terms of staffing and resources. Each MP receives 2.5 full-time equivalent staff, which is insufficient given the role of crossbench MPs is similar to those of shadow ministers.
- Crossbench MPs do not receive the extra allowances or salaries that shadow cabinet members get, despite having similar responsibilities. This lack of recognition and resources hampers their ability to perform effectively.
- To compensate, crossbench MPs often use their Electorate Office and Communications (EO&C) Budget to supplement existing employees' days on a casual basis. However, this affects staff entitlements, such as full parental leave, because being partly employed on a casual basis does not provide full coverage.
- Allowing the EO&C Budget to be used for non-casual staff (for example, on a fixed-term basis) could help address these issues.
- The cost of communication, particularly via Australia Post, has significantly increased, limiting MPs' ability to communicate effectively and regularly with constituents.
- Additionally, managing social media and ensuring compliance with legal requirements has become more resource intensive.