

MEDIA RELEASE

Democracy Most Important for Gilmore

by Carmel Macallum, The Greens candidate for Gilmore federal electorate

Greens Candidate Carmel McCallum has again been preselected to run as The Greens candidate for the next federal election in the Seat of Gilmore.

Carmel's selection came through an authentic democratic process, with all members of Kiama, Shoalhaven and Eurobodalla Greens groups being invited to cast their vote.

Carmel affirmed she would represent all of Gilmore's residents.

Carmel, a qualified pharmacist, has had a wide range of business and social experience. She was the former owner of West-End Pharmacy in Berry Street, Nowra and has worked in over 50 other pharmacies in NSW, both as a casual and as a locum.

Carmel, who lives in Cambewarra, said she was concerned about money and influence from Big Business, which is undermining democracy and fair representation. "People deserve fairer pay and working conditions if our economy is to do well for everyone."

"We are seeing too much taxpayers' money being given away to 'foundations', private providers and other 'facilitators', without any transparency and proper tendering processes, and no evaluation of outcomes, just like the banks. This is why the NDIS is failing. The people of Gilmore, and Australia, deserve much better than this," she said.

"Increasing pollution of our planet, including our beautiful South Coast, is being ignored by the current government, when there are so many opportunities to change this course, producing better health, providing employment in sustainable industries, and producing bounteous agricultural and primary products. There are some great examples already being put into practice by individuals and community groups in this electorate, such as Dr Pia Winberg establishing a seaweed farm and RePower Shoalhaven assisting rooftop solar development.

"There are other pressing issues including the increasing unemployment rate, especially for youth. This, I consider, requires urgent action. We also need to increase pensions and unemployment benefits, make tertiary education free again, and introduce a universal basic income, so that everyone is able to have decent nutrition, safe housing, educational opportunities and better transport access."

The lead Greens Senate candidate, Dr Mehreen Faruqi, a qualified engineer, congratulated Carmel on her pre-selection and gave full support to Carmel's identification of issues important to Gilmore. Dr Faruqi is well aware of the many pressing needs of the Gilmore community including social welfare, devastation of the TAFE system, lack of job opportunities, deterioration of the NSW health system, especially in the Shoalhaven, and the overall transport issues.

Dr Mehreen Faruqi, who has been serving the state of New South Wales as a member of the Legislative Council for the last five years, said Carmel is "an incredible community advocate and congratulates her on her preselection to represent the Greens at the upcoming election".

"I really look forward to campaigning with Carmel and Greens candidates across the state as we present our vision for a progressive, forward thinking and compassionate Australia.

"I have a strong track record in taking on the Liberal/National Government here in New South Wales and for standing up for the environment, against the privatisation of public assets and services, and advocating for the marginalised in our community. I look forward to applying this same energy to challenge the Turnbull Government," she concluded.

Carmel said that we have seen deterioration in social capital over the last two decades and believes this can be addressed if we first respected each other, then government policies would make people the central concern.

"We can begin this redress by accepting The Uluru Statement from The Heart, to recognise our First Nations people, and hearing their voice. As the candidate for Gilmore I would like to engage the community in this important campaign of First Nations recognition," Carmel said.

"I look forward to listening to local voters' current concerns, while caring for our people and environment, and offering Greens' ideas to grow our nation for a sustainable future. Unlike the older parties, The Greens have clear policies on the major issues," Carmel said.

For further details, please contact Carmel:

0414 392 660, carmelmccallum@msn.com,

and Mehreen Faruki on 0474 437 111 (calls only, no text messages)

A brief CV for Carmel

Carmel moved to the Shoalhaven area in 1978, to reside first in Vincentia, having holidayed there since 1974, later in North Nowra and then in Cambewarra. She is married to Howard and they have four grown-up children. Howard, who served in the Navy, received naval postings to California in 1985-87, and then later to the RAAF Headquarters in Glenbrook in the Blue Mountains in 1993, where the family lived for almost 20 years.

The McCallums returned to Cambewarra in 2012.

Currently, Carmel is Vice-President of Professional Pharmacists Australia (a division the union Professionals Australia) representing employed pharmacists. She also sits on the South Coast Labour Council representing the NSW Committee of Professionals Australia, is the Co-Vice President of Unions Shoalhaven, and spent eight years as a councillor on the NSW Federation of P&Cs Associations, and was a board member on the Lower Blue Mountains Neighbourhood Centre.

Membership of The Greens since 2004 and campaign experience across electorates in Sydney, the Blue Mountains and locally - four times as a federal candidate, and twice as a local council candidate - have provided Carmel with a detailed knowledge of Greens policies and capacity to represent the community when she is successful in the coming campaign.