



Upper Spencer Gulf Delegation Visits Canberra

20 August 2017

Representatives from Port Pirie, Port Augusta and Whyalla had a whirlwind visit to Canberra last week, meeting with local member Rowan Ramsey and fourteen Ministers, Advisers and South Australian Senators.

Port Augusta Mayor and Chair of Spencer Gulf Cities, Sam Johnson said the visit was important to make sure the Upper Spencer Gulf remained a priority in the national capital.

"Whilst we now have major industry projects over the line in each of the three cities, we need to make sure we are doing all we can to leverage from these investments so our regional economy can diversify and strengthen, and our communities can flourish".

"It was also an opportunity to say thank you to many of our Federal parliamentarians who have supported the Upper Spencer Gulf over the past few years, who could see our potential, believed in us and went in to bat for us when the chips were down."

"We did have a few comments expressing surprise at the positivity of our visit and that it wasn't just about a list of problems and chasing more money". "It seems there are rarely delegations who just want the chance to say thank you !"

"For us it is important to recognise the contributors to our current economic transition and the opportunity to keep working in partnership to really cement our future and reposition our region.

"We have a rare situation now with all three cities moving ahead, so we need to keep working hard to make sure we can withstand any future shocks when they inevitably come".

"The last four years have been pretty awful for the region – we don't want to end up in the same position in the future just because we didn't make the most of our current opportunities".

The delegation covered issues such as decentralisation, defence, higher education, renewable energy, marine tourism and opportunities for better coordination and use of resources between all levels of government to deliver a successful transition of the Upper Spencer Gulf.

The Group met with the Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce; Defence Industries Minister Christopher Pyne; Education Minister and SA Senator Simon Birmingham; Minister for Energy and Environment, Hon Josh Frydenberg; Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science Arthur Sinodinos; Assistant Minister for Agriculture and South Australian Senator Anne Ruston along with advisers from the offices of the Prime Minister, Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Health and Sport, Minister for Aged Care; representatives from the Nick Xenophon team; SA Labor Senator Alex Gallacher and South Australia's new Independent Senator Lucy Gichuhi.

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