



**MP defends rural jobs
3 December 2007**

Member for Flinders Liz Penfold was attacked in parliament recently by the Member for Giles Lyn Breuer for objecting to the removal of services and personnel from country areas under the Shared Services SA program.

In a speech laced with vitriol and irrelevance Ms Breuer said Port Lincoln is an extremely affluent area where some of the richest people in Australia live.

“It is absolutely ridiculous listening to the Member for Flinders whingeing, whining and carping,” she said.

Mrs Penfold defended her constituents, quoting a Port Lincoln Times article reporting the opposition of the Public Service Association (PSA) to the Shared Services action.

PSA general secretary Jan McMahon said health would be hard hit across regional South Australia with job losses. She said some skills would be wasted and there was no way that everybody could find other jobs if they chose not to relocate to Adelaide.

Mrs Penfold pointed out that the Flinders electorate was more than Port Lincoln.

“Port Lincoln may have a group of wealthy people but there is a huge number of people who are less than advantaged, and to wipe off Eyre Peninsula, as so often happens by this Labor government, as if it were just the domain of a few particular people at Port Lincoln, really makes me mad,” she said.

Mrs Penfold said that mostly women would be affected by the changes.

“These women often have two or more small jobs that they put together to make a decent income for themselves and their families, and now those jobs will be lost,” she said.

Shared Services SA was defended by the Minister for Regional Development Karlene Maywald and Minister for Agriculture Rory McEwen. Minister McEwen’s about face was in direct conflict with his statements “that more public servants should be moved out of Adelaide, not the reverse”, prior to his appointment as a Minister.

Mrs Penfold said the government should be looking at how to get more businesses and more people back into country regions, not taking out long-term existing jobs.

“For every one of these people, forced out of a job, means that the pressure is put back on the few who are remaining, and those who are remaining are beginning to burn out.

“I know that because I see them in my office.

“The pressure that this government is putting on rural communities is unforgivable,” she said.

Mrs. Penfold encourages people to protest against rural job losses by signing the petition available in her office or can be downloaded from www.lizpenfold.com

TAKING THE SHARING OUT OF SERVICES 20 November 2007

Member for Flinders Liz Penfold slammed the Labor state government’s Shared Services SA which is removing services from rural and regional South Australia.

“The Labor government is in the process of shifting 250 jobs out of regional areas into the Adelaide CBD.

“Health, education, housing – all will be affected,” she said.

The Public Service Association revealed that the Rann Labor government approved the creation of a new organisation called Shared Services SA, pulling thousands of positions into another central bureaucracy. Positions will transfer from regional areas to Adelaide, with those people not electing to transfer being declared surplus to requirements.

Just what “surplus to requirements” will mean for individuals is not clear.

Mrs Penfold said multi skilling (where one employee is trained to handle a number of areas) is part of today’s workforce.

“Under Labor’s new arrangement, a worker may lose 0.4 of their position, leaving him or her with only three days work a week.

“The government, when questioned in parliament, was unable to explain what would happen to the worker,” she said.

Mrs Penfold said the Liberal Opposition has started a petition objecting to the removal of jobs from regional communities. Copies of the petition can be obtained from her office or downloaded from her website www.lizpenfold.com

Regional Job Losses 1 November 2007

Member for Flinders Liz Penfold says that the State Labor Government’s claim that regional Public Service job losses will be offset by increasing demand in other sectors is seriously flawed.

The Government’s claim that people who lose their jobs will be able to find work in other sectors is questionable. The principal employment opportunities in mining and building sectors are for labouring, trades or machinery operators, not payroll administrators.

The 250 Public Service jobs being cut from regional areas and centralised in Adelaide as part of the shared services reform, are payroll, finance and human resources positions. Many are held by women who can not easily relocate due to family commitments. In smaller rural areas off-farm income is vital, particularly as rural families and small communities struggle with drought.

Job losses and the subsequent loss of even one family from a small community has a negative effect on local kindergartens, schools, businesses and services by a ratio of 6 to 1.

At least 1,500 jobs will be lost from our regions. This government’s decision does not take into account that

people have to leave their homes and communities to find work. When a job is lost in the city people can generally find another without having to shift their family.

Mrs Penfold said, "The Government's decision is devastating, with many communities already having to come to grips with reduced incomes and farmers being forced to seek work elsewhere."

"It is time the value of regions and their contribution to the State is recognised and valued. The Government should support regions by ensuring jobs are retained in the bush so regions can continue to play their significant role in the State's growth and economy" she said.