

23 April 2025

Michael Farrell
General Manager Advocacy and Engagement
Family Day Care Australia



Dear Mr Farrell,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide the Coalition's views on the important issues facing your members. A response to your questions is attached.

Under Labor, Australia's economy is weak, inflation and interest rates have stayed too high for too long, housing is unaffordable, and our country is less safe.

Under Labor, Australians are paying on average 13% more for food, 18% more for rent, and over 30% more for power and gas and young Australians have seen their dream of home ownership slip away.

The Coalition will get Australia back on track by delivering:

1. **Strong economy with low inflation.** We will rein in wasteful spending and reduce tax, red-tape and union control over small businesses.
2. **Cheaper energy.** We will ensure a balanced mix, including more renewables, more gas, and (in seven locations) replace retired coal plants with zero-emissions nuclear energy.
3. **Affordable homes.** We will fund critical infrastructure required for housing, assist first home buyers, restrict foreign investors, and rebalance Labor's record migration intake.
4. **Safer communities.** We will get tough on violent crime by non-citizens, boost our defence and border security, and improve online safety for children.
5. **Quality healthcare.** We will fund more GPs to address current shortages and increase bulk billing and the number of Medicare-subsidised mental health sessions.

Thank you for communicating our response to your members. Further information about the Coalition's election policies can be found at www.liberal.org.au/our-plan.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Hirst'.

Andrew Hirst
Federal Director

The Coalition's Response to Family Day Care Australia

2025 Federal Election Questionnaire

The Coalition believes that families should have access to affordable early childhood education, ensuring parents can balance their professional and personal responsibilities.

We want to see an early childhood education system which is responsible, measured and provides support to families who need it most.

A Dutton Coalition Government will:

- Drive improvements to support low out-of-pocket child care costs for Australian families.
- Support greater access to child care places in regional Australia and back local solutions to provide better access to flexible child care and education services for families who work non-standard hours, and families living in regional, rural and remote communities.
- Focus on providing targeted assistance to families in greatest need by offering the highest subsidies to those with the lowest incomes, the most hours of subsidy to those families working the most, and additional support for households with multiple children in child care.
- Ensure the early childhood education system delivers successful outcomes that make a difference in the lives of Indigenous children.

The Coalition is focused on providing families with choice and flexibility. We will ensure that the \$16 billion of taxpayer funds which is currently being spent on the Child Care Subsidy each year is targeted for those who need it most, especially families who are working, studying or volunteering.

The Coalition will not make empty promises like Anthony Albanese's claim of "cheaper child care". Since Labor came to power, the cost of early childhood education has soared by over 22 per cent.

The Labor Government has completely neglected Family Day Care. It purposefully designed the Worker Retention Payment so that Family Day Care was excluded, denying educators a pay rise offered to centre based educators.

In contrast, the Coalition understands and appreciates the important role Family Day Care plays in our community. The overwhelming majority of non-standard hours of care is provided by Family Day Care services, it plays an important role in many multicultural communities who prefer the smaller settings and provides a service in regional, rural and remote communities where there may not be enough children to make long day care viable.

The Coalition will work with Family Day Care representatives and operators to ensure funding arrangements and regulation are fit for purpose so that this service remains a viable choice for Australian families.

The Coalition will also ensure that funding designated for regional communities goes to these areas of need, unlike Labor who redirected funding from the Community Child Care Fund to inner city and metro communities, including the PM's electorate of Grayndler.

An elected Coalition Government will establish a new \$100 million Raising the Regions Program to deliver flexible and innovative approaches to early childhood education and care in child care deserts; regional and rural areas where there is limited or no supply.

We know that regional, rural and remote communities in Australia have little to no access childcare. We also know that long day care models do not work for these communities, which have far fewer children and families spread across vast geographies.

Labor's policies have completely neglected this reality. The guarantee of child care three days a week means absolutely nothing if you live in a community where you can't even get one day a week.

Under the Coalition's plan, funding will be available to support the set-up or expansion of flexible alternatives to the long-day care model, with potential models including;

- Allowing family day care educators to run care out of a community space, such as a town hall or library;
- Delivery in nature, such as bush kindy;
- Mobile day care; or
- Employer-supported models in workplaces.