



**PAUL FLETCHER MP
MEMBER FOR BRADFIELD
MINISTER FOR URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE AND CITIES
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TRANSCRIPT – SKY NEWS LIVE AM AGENDA WITH KIERAN GILBERT

E&OE...

Topics: Bill Shorten's funding black hole for Western Sydney rail; Newspill

KIERAN GILBERT:

Let's go live now to the Minister for Urban Infrastructure and Cities, Paul Fletcher. Minister, thanks for your time. Yesterday, a big part of the Bill Shorten pitch at the New South Wales Labor conference was a \$6 billion commitment for Sydney Metro West and Western Sydney rail. For that part of Sydney, a booming part of Sydney in terms of its population and importance economically, that's a positive, isn't it, that there's bipartisan support for that sort of infrastructure?

PAUL FLETCHER:

Well, Kieran, good to be with you, and what Bill Shorten has shown is that he's unbelievable when it comes to Western Sydney rail because he announced \$3 billion for a rail network. But when you look at the totality of what he said he was going to deliver, that's about 60 to 70 kilometres, even 80 kilometres of rail line. And he says he can do it for \$3 billion.

Now, just months ago, the New South Wales Government and the Commonwealth Government put out a scoping study with detailed analysis of Western Sydney rail, and what he says he's going to do would cost between \$21 and \$26 billion. He's announced \$3 billion. Even if that's matched by a future state government, that's still a \$20 billion blackhole. Now, in contrast, what the Turnbull and Berejiklian governments have is a clear plan to deliver rail to Western Sydney Airport, rail from St Marys to the airport and then to the Aerotropolis just to the south.

The Prime Minister and the Premier, just in March this year, committed that the joint objective of the two governments is rail to the airport by the time it opens, the cost to be shared 50-50 between the two governments. We've got a clear plan, a preliminary business case already completed, work now underway on the detailed business case, the business case fully funded in the Budget and that detailed business case will be completed before the end of next year.

KIERAN GILBERT:

When you look at, you know, a commitment from opposition though, \$3 billion for that particular Western Sydney rail is a significant amount of money, regardless. And if any government coming into office surely would undertake their own scoping study and analysis, would they not upon election?

Paul Fletcher, Minister for Urban Infrastructure and Cities, Sydney

PAUL FLETCHER:

Kieran, the whole point is that you couldn't find an issue where there was more detailed information in the public domain about how much this network that Bill Shorten has promised is going to cost. And it's very clear that if you go from Macarthur to St Marys, to Schofields, the scoping study - two years of work by the two governments - says that will be \$15 to \$20 billion. If you also do airport to Leppington, that's another \$6 billion. And by the way, he says he's going to go to Rouse Hill, so you've also got to go from Schofields to Rouse Hill, and the uncompleted part of that is at least a billion. So, he's announced \$3 billion for a network that is going to cost \$26 billion or more. He's got a \$20 billion blackhole. Bill Shorten is unbelievable - Bill when it comes to Western Sydney rail, as he is on just about everything else he talks about.

KIERAN GILBERT:

Let's turn our attention to the Newspoll. And 65 per cent of those surveyed either want the company taxes to be cut as soon as possible, or in stages over the next 10 years, and yet still the Government trailing on a two-party basis. Despite your big signature policy in terms of boosting economic growth having 65 per cent support, why is there that disparity that remains?

PAUL FLETCHER:

Look, I'm not going to comment on the polls. What I will comment on is numbers that really matter. \$530 is the tax relief in respect to the 2018-19 financial year that will be available to some 4 million Australians. Up to 10 million Australians will get some tax relief out of the measures that take effect in respect to the 2018-19 financial year, the year that just begun. Of course, that's part of a three-part personal income tax plan, which will ultimately see 94 per cent of Australians paying no more than 32.5 cents. We've also got clear plans to reduce company tax. Not just plans, already in place, quite a number of companies now having lower tax rates. Bill Shorten wants to put up tax rates on businesses. Some 940,000 businesses from 2026/27, would face an increase in their company tax rate under Mr Shorten.

KIERAN GILBERT:

Okay. Well, we'll get a pretty clear indication on all of that with a couple of polls that count - I know you always say there's only one day that counts, Paul. There's a couple over the next 12 months, with 28 July looming as well. Thanks Paul Fletcher, I appreciate your time, as always, Minister for Urban Infrastructure and Cities, Paul Fletcher joining me.