



Bill Shorten MP

Federal Member for Maribyrnong



18 November 2021

To whom it may concern,

It is with great pleasure that I write in support of Volunteer West. The incalculable value of volunteers has been brought into sharp relief as Australia has navigated COVID-19, with an increase in community members in need of support organisations, advocacy and social interaction.

As the only volunteer resource centre in the region, Volunteer West is crucial to the fabric of Melbourne's west, referring over 13,000 volunteers to services that rely on the crucial input of volunteers to survive.

Without services such as theirs, especially when navigating the unique challenges faced during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, critical services that are essential to the wellbeing of constituents across Melbourne's western region would cease to exist.

This would have a profound impact on the wellbeing of Melburnians living in our growing communities in Melbourne's west.

These communities are from a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences, with many residents born overseas or speaking a language other than English in the home. This results in some unique and specific needs with regards to employment and accessing of services, which are often addressed in community, by community.

Volunteering creates strong bonds of comradeship and unity, which Victorians need now more than ever. Our community wellbeing and social networks are often reliant on these volunteers, making it vital to ensure that organisations facilitating volunteerism are themselves supported to continue their work.

It is crucial therefore, that organisations such as Volunteer West are appropriately resourced through funding streams such as the Commonwealth Volunteer Management Activity.



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In meeting with representatives from Volunteer West, it is clear that our communities in Melbourne's west would benefit immensely from this important volunteer resource centre receiving a proportionate amount of funding.

Volunteer West, and their innovative programs such as VolREACH, should receive investment equal to the value it provides the community.

With the appropriate funding such a program has the potential to provide essential volunteer resources and assist all of us in enhancing the effectiveness of our volunteer sector.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Shorten".

The Hon. Bill Shorten MP

Shadow Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme

Shadow Minister for Government Services

Federal Member for Maribyrnong