

Statement

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Treasurer

Minister for Industrial Relations

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WE'RE PROUD TO BE REGIONAL VICTORIANS

Last night, the Liberal Member for Brighton James Newbury made a series of bizarre social media posts – claiming Premier Jacinta Allan and I are unqualified to be leaders in this state because we are from the country.

He said Victoria was being “run by out of towners”.

That we “don’t even live here.”

You’d think the alternative minister for planning would know that a map of Victoria extends beyond Melbourne.

Let me state the bleeding obvious: regional Victorians are Victorians, too.

We are not less capable because we live in country communities. We don’t deserve less or ask for more.

We rely on the same health system, our kids attend the same school system, we work in the same economy, we face the same cost of living pressure – and we share the same future – as anyone in Melbourne.

There are 1.6 million of us.

And we remember.

We remember when Jeff Kennett called regional Victoria the toenails of the state.

We remember his Treasurer who signed off on the closure of regional hospitals, train lines, schools and the SEC. He was also the Member for Brighton, just like James Newbury.

Until now, Victorians might remember James Newbury as the politician who is disgusted by the idea of more homes for young people near train stations.

Now they will also remember him as the politician who is disgusted by regional Victorians.

I’m proud to be a regional Treasurer.

JA is proud to be a regional Premier.

And unlike James Newbury, John Pesutto and the Liberal Party, we get up every morning and fight for all Victorians – not just some.