

## Federal Election Q&A with the Barker Candidates – Summary of Results

The Federal Election Online Q&A session for the Barker electorate was organised by the Mount Gambier Chamber of Commerce to gather insights into how the upcoming election could benefit our local business community. All ten Barker candidates were invited to participate, with a strong focus on business-related questions submitted by our members. While questions were categorised into a range of topics, the primary emphasis remained on issues directly impacting local businesses.

The aim of the session was to keep our members informed about the candidates' positions and the election process, strengthening our community's understanding of the election's potential impact on the local economy.



# MEET THE BARKER CANDIDATES

 Tony PASIN	 Rosa HILLAM	 Jonathan PIETZSCH	 James ROTHE	 Jennifer TROETH
 Michael BROHIER	 Ian PENNO	 Robert JAMESON	 Major Moogy SUMNER	 Cody SCHOLLES

**2025 Federal Election**      **Saturday 3rd May 2025**

# Cody Scholes

## 1. Business Taxes and Financial Support

- Q. What changes to business taxes do you propose, and how will they benefit small business?

A. I think government can support businesses by cutting red tape and dropping ridiculous regulations that are often doubled or tripled up by state or local governments. Businesses should receive incentives for hiring local employees. Especially large companies who use Agencies to fill staffing shortages. This may include limiting or eliminating payroll tax.

- Q. How will you ensure small businesses have better access to loans and financial support?

A. I have heard most small businesses collapse within 5 years. For this reason, we should be limiting taxation on small businesses that are ripping their profits out, which are threatening their stability. Ultimately, with high overheads and high taxes/rent, many businesses close down. I would like to see a lower level, or a stepped level of income tax applied for income tax - to give small businesses a chance to make back their initial investment and get ahead.

## 2. Support for Small Businesses

- Q. How will you support programs to help small businesses find skilled employees?

A. Small businesses who employ local should receive benefits such as reduced payroll tax. Small businesses should also be able to write off the cost of upskilling employees so they can grow their skilled employee base. Add to this the reduced payroll tax for hiring local staff, I think we could support small businesses to find skilled employees.

- Q. What initiatives will you introduce to help businesses adopt new technologies and innovate?

A. Businesses who upgrade appliances such as fridges and freezers to newer, more energy efficient models should be able to write these assets off. Up-front costs are a major hinderance to investing in new technologies, and perhaps a work around to this barrier would be a government backed, interest free loan.

- Q. If elected, what will you and your party do to help ease the pressures on small business? With rising costs of power, wages, rent, supply chain issues, cost of living pressures for our customers, how will you look to easing these? Many businesses are

finding it increasingly hard to stay afloat and the flow-on effect is killing small business.

A. I would back all fuel sources that power our grid that supply cheap and reliable power. This means that I would never support blowing up our economy in the pursuit of renewable energy. High energy costs are directly linked to lower quality of life and lower standards of living. High energy costs are also linked to higher costs to consumers for goods and services. I am 100% behind lowering the cost of energy so that not just small businesses, but everyone can have a chance to get ahead with more money in their pocket.

- Q. What economic policy do you think needs to be introduced or changed to help the small business of Barker?

A. Federal government should get out of the way by dropping red tape and compliance measures that are doubled or tripled up by state or local governments. Giving the payroll or the stepped tax breaks associated with hiring local or starting a business. Backing interest free loans to address the upfront costs of investing in new technology or upgrades.

- Q. How will you support programs to help small businesses find skilled employees, including through migration and reskilling initiatives?

A. Businesses should be rewarded for upskilling employees, including tax deductible fees paid to fund the courses. Businesses should be rewarded for hiring local, instead of contractors or agency staff.

### 3. Natural Resources and Economic Policy

- Q. Does the government need to do a better job at capitalizing on our natural resources? And why don't we take more revenue in royalties and taxes when we are one of the largest gas exporters in the world, for example? We should be doing what Norway and Qatar do.

A. Absolutely the Australian government needs to take proper advantage of selling off our natural resources. Australians are being ripped off and treated like mugs while our own natural resources are being sold for pennies to overseas companies who go on to make billions of dollars in profit. The major letdowns (political parties) are selling us out and feathering their own nests while we, the regular people are left picking up the bill. We should be receiving massive amounts of revenue for our exports, and yes we should have a sovereign wealth fund.

- Q. Qatar has zero income tax as they profit enough money from their natural resources.

A. Australia could be in this position too. Australia sells that much natural gas and keeps so little, that if we used this gas ourselves we could slash the price of energy in our own country.

#### 4. Representation and Competition

- Q. The Electorate of Barker is a big area with many different industries and businesses throughout the various regions with sometimes competing needs and wants. How have you or how do you intend to make sure they are all heard and represented equally?

A. As a 100% independent candidate, I am only interested in advancing our interests. I have received no donations, I have made no deals with any parties or organisations. I am tired of watching Aussies working harder now than ever before, and still struggling to get ahead. I know that we all want to get ahead, and have a fair go. Getting government out of the way is the best way that I can think will achieve this. Smaller government is better for everyone.

- Q. Government doesn't have a good record of backing winners. Will you get out of the way and just let business be business?

A. Yes.

- Q. Competition is critical to business efficiency. How will you strengthen and entrench competitive practices including, say, competition with arms of government such as councils?

A. By empowering the ACCC and by discouraging large corporate expansions that make it less viable for small businesses to compete.

#### 5. Infrastructure

- Q. Australia ranks 58th in the world for internet speed. And we're a rich country! How will you increase our ranking?

A. By speaking with people who know what they're doing, who understand how to get this done. I have not been bought out or paid off by any company or business, and I owe nothing to nobody. I am funding my own campaign 100% off my own bat,

and I believe Australians need someone who is going to put them first instead of a party or a doner.