



# Media Release

## Senator Alan Eggleston

### Liberal Senator for Western Australia

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## **Rudd's Riding the Boom – and leaving everyone else in his dust**

The North West communities of the Pilbara region have been left short changed by the Rudd Government, while his State Labor colleagues continue to reap the benefits of a booming resources industry, according to Western Australia Liberal Senator Alan Eggleston.

“The Pilbara communities, straining under the pressures of the “China Resources Boom”, have turned to the Rudd Government for assistance only to find the very program created to help these growing communities, was one of the first to be axed by Rudd.” Senator Eggleston said.

The \$200 million Growing Regions program, announced in September last year by the Coalition Government, was designed to help working families in regional Australia cope with the impacts of rapid growth by providing funding to improve social, economic and community infrastructure.

Several local business and community representatives expressed their frustration at the lack of support from the federal Government at the recent “Riding the Boom” conference in Karratha, an opportunity for members of the local communities to speak out on some of the issues affecting them as a result of the booming resources industry.

Senator Eggleston, who was in attendance at the conference, said it gave him a clear message: the resources boom may be filling the coffers of the State and Federal Labor Governments, but nothing is being put back into the communities, and now the locals are suffering.

“It is obvious an overall plan is needed for this region which clearly has a prosperous future lasting for hundreds of years ahead of it.”

“Regrettably, the Rudd Government representative at the meeting, Gary Gray, who heads the newly established Office of Northern Australia, was anything but encouraging when he described the call for extra funding for community amenities and infrastructure as “whingeing”.

“Mr Gray’s lack of understanding of the very real issues facing the communities in the Pilbara is reflective of the Rudd Government’s treatment of the funding programs that should be in place to support these growing regions.”

“Kevin Rudd needs to live up to his election promise to be the “Prime Minister for all Australians”, and start approaching real problems with real solutions.”

**Ends**