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www.saveourvoices.com.au

TIM FISCHER LENDS HIS VOICE TO CAMPAIGN FOR MEDIA LAW REFORMS

Former Deputy Prime Minister and leader of the Nationals, Tim Fischer, has joined the ‘Save Our Voices’ campaign, calling for changes to outdated media laws that prevent regional broadcasters from competing fairly with their major metropolitan counterparts.

“Everywhere we look, regional voices are being cut back – at the three main regional networks, but also through cuts at the ABC and among Australia’s many independent regional and rural newspapers,” Mr. Fischer said.

“Local news and information is vitally important, and it must be protected and preserved if regional and rural Australia is to continue to have a voice.”

From Monday, the campaign by Prime, WIN, Southern Cross Austereo and Imparja will ramp up with the launch of a TV and radio advertising campaign, urging regional and rural Australians to lend their voice to the cause by pledging their support at saveourvoices.com.au.

The campaign, which will feature Mr. Fischer in a series of 60, 45 and 30 second spots, will run in prime time across key regional markets and will be supported by a comprehensive online and social media campaign to enable local communities to learn more and get involved.

Independent community research in key marginal federal electorates is also being finalised.

Prime, WIN, Southern Cross Austereo and Imparja want changes to the Broadcasting Services Act – legislation introduced in 1992 – to enable them to compete on a level playing field.

The Broadcasting Services Act restricts the number of types of media any one company can own in a licence area as well as the number of Australians each television network is allowed to reach.

It does not account for the internet or the fact that major metropolitan TV networks, internet news services and Pay TV now reach 100% of the Australian population via smartphones, tablets, linear streaming services and catch-up TV.

Faced with rising costs, restrictions on what economies of scale can be achieved and increased competition in regional licence areas, regional broadcasters have limited options to manage costs and remain viable.

PRIME



Imparja

“Cuts to local content on regional radio and television are inevitable unless our media laws change,” Mr. Fischer said.

“Changes to the broadcasting rules are urgently required if regional broadcasters are to compete on the same basis as everyone else in their local markets, and ensure that the big regional issues and important community information continues to get the coverage it deserves for the 9 million Australians living in regional, rural and remote areas.”

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