

Thursday, 25 November 2021

STATEMENT FROM THE PREMIER

Richard Wynne, Member for Richmond and Minister for Planning, Housing and Child Protection – and former Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Local Government and Aboriginal Affairs – has advised me that he will not seek re-election in 2022.

As a member of parliament and a Minister, Richard has always brought the utmost integrity to his work, and fundamental decency in his approach to others.

Long before he was elected to the Victorian Parliament, he was a stalwart of the Melbourne community. Richard was born, raised, and educated in the heart of our city before serving as a social worker in the inner suburbs and then Lord Mayor of Melbourne.

Richard's father spent most of his life labouring on Melbourne's waterfront under challenging conditions. Many that worked with him fought and won a string of battles for the most basic of workplace rights.

I have no doubt that this quintessentially Labor upbringing instilled in Richard the principles he's held close throughout an entire career of service: the value of education and the opportunity it provides, the security of a roof over your head, and profound empathy for people who need a helping hand.

In his inaugural speech in 1999, Richard described public housing as one of Melbourne's most valuable social assets – something to be preserved, expanded, replenished.

I'm sure he would have pinched himself then if you'd have told him that years later, he'd be at the helm of delivering the biggest social housing build Australia has ever seen. He also ensured integrity and transparency are central to planning decisions.

In his own words: *"investing not just in bricks and mortar, but the lives of Victorians for decades to come."*

In that inaugural speech, Richard also spoke about his electorate grappling with the consequences of drug abuse, and his inability to stand by as its death toll rose.

For decades, Richard has campaigned relentlessly for a medically supervised injecting centre in the area – because he knew it would save lives. I was proud to stand with him when we delivered it.

I have asked Richard to continue in his role as Minister for Planning, Housing and Child Protection until the election next year.

I want to thank him for the tireless work he's done for our city and our state, and the heart with which he's served those he's represented.

Richard has always deeply understood the honour bestowed on him by his community, and in his many years of service, he has never let them down.

On a personal note, I owe Richard a debt of gratitude for his friendship and his frank and fearless advice over many years. I wish him, Svetlana and their sons all the best for the future.