

Wednesday, 7 May 2025

STATEMENT FROM THE PREMIER

Race Mathews believed in the power of government to change lives – and he spent his life proving that it could.

He carried those values through his early days and every chapter of his career – as an advisor to Gough Whitlam, a federal MP, a Victorian Minister, and a local councillor.

He never forgot where he came from or who he was there to serve.

Race helped shape the early design of Medibank – laying the groundwork for Medicare and helping build a health system that treated care as a right, not a privilege.

As a Minister in the Cain Government, he led reforms that changed our state forever.

He strengthened child protection, modernised Victoria Police, tightened gun laws, and improved Victoria's disaster response – especially after Ash Wednesday.

And he believed that fairness meant making sure everyone could take part in the life of the state – not just through services, but through the things that bring joy and connection.

It's why he championed the arts, helping make culture something people could see, join in, and feel proud of – no matter who they were or where they lived.

Race's legacy is found in the Victoria he helped build – a fairer, more caring, more creative place.

On behalf of the Victorian Government and the Victorian Labor family, we send our heartfelt condolences to his wife Iola, his family, and everyone who knew and loved him.

Victoria is better for his service – and our movement is stronger for his belief.