

Media Release



Gavin Jennings MLC
Special Minister of State
Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

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IMPROVING DATA TO DELIVER BETTER SERVICES FOR VICTORIANS

The Andrews Labor Government is improving data-sharing across government to deliver better services for Victorians.

The Government collects vast quantities of data – about education and health, our communities, business, employment, infrastructure and the environment. However for too long government data has been held in agency silos and not available across government to tackle many of the pressing community concerns.

The *Victorian Data Sharing Bill 2017* – which was second read in Parliament today – will break down these silos and ensure agencies can share data and information across the whole of Government.

Enabling data to be shared and used across government will provide insights about what works and why, and ensure informed policy decisions that deliver for hard working families – from tackling family violence to improve health outcomes.

This Bill provides a clear legal framework that allows for government data to be shared for policy making, service planning and design, enabling government agencies to work together to tackle key priorities.

The Bill also includes strong safeguards and oversight to protect personal data and information, including independent oversight by Victoria’s privacy regulators, mandatory reporting of any potential breaches, and new offences for unauthorised access, use or disclosure.

This Bill follows other work that the Labor Government is doing to modernise Victoria’s data and information sharing regime that includes:

- Legislation to protect women affected by family violence by better sharing information and prioritising victim survivors over their perpetrators
- The development of a Central Information Point to facilitate information sharing across agencies involved in protecting women from family violence
- The creation of Office of Victorian Information Commissioner, bringing together freedom of information with data protection and privacy, to provide independent oversight across those closely-related fields.

The Labor Government has also appointed Victoria’s first Chief Data Officer within the Victorian Centre for Data Insights to transform how the Victorian Government uses data to strengthen policy making. This Bill supports the new Officer by establishing into law the statutory position, and its powers and functions.

Quotes attributable to Special Minister of State Gavin Jennings

“We’re breaking down government silos, removing red tape and addressing other barriers to sharing data, so that we can improve services for hard working Victorians.”

“Victorians want us to use every tool at our disposal to make their lives better, boost jobs and keep them safe – this includes the vast amount of data and information that we hold across Government.”

“This Bill gets the right balance right between the need to share data and important safeguards for privacy and security of information.”

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