



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Federation Chamber**

**CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS**

**Mobile Phone Services**

**SPEECH**

**Wednesday, 20 November 2013**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

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<b>Questioner</b>		<b>Responder</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	Tehan, Dan, MP	<b>Question No.</b>	

**Mr TEHAN** (Wannon) (09:33): Mr Deputy Speaker Scott, can I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your appointment. It is very well deserved, and I know you will do an outstanding job in this parliament.

I rise today to talk about a very important issue, especially to regional and rural communities. It is to do with mobile phone black spots. This is an issue which continues to be raised constantly by communities across Australia where they are lacking in mobile telecommunications.

I was privileged to have the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Communications come to my electorate of Wannon some three weeks after the election to talk to some of my local communities about this issue. We had public meetings at Mirranatwa, Landsborough and Moonambel, where communities came and told the parliamentary secretary how there is a real need to address mobile black spots and about the damage that is done to those communities due to a lack of mobile telecommunications. It hurts their businesses. It hurts their communities. Most importantly, it impacts on their safety. With the fire season approaching, a lot of these communities are left vulnerable because they do not have telecommunications. They will not be able to get the early warning through SMS that other communities can receive where they do have mobile phone telecommunications.

This is an issue we need to address. I am pleased to be able to say that the coalition understand that. They have put \$100 million towards creating mobile telecommunication services in regional and rural areas. It is a fantastic start. We need to get the two programs rolled out as soon as possible so we can start seeing the benefit in these communities of improved telecommunications. We will have to do more, but this is a fantastic start.

These communities at these meetings spoke from the heart to the parliamentary secretary about how they are being left behind because they do not have access to this form of telecommunications. I know the parliamentary secretary heard the message loud and clear. I know that he is determined to roll out a proper black spots program. I will be with him 100 per cent of the way. We saw six years of inaction in this space under the previous Labor government. It was not good enough. We now need to act on behalf of these communities and similar communities across the nation to fix this problem. (*Time expired*)