



# Dan Repacholi MP

## MEMBER FOR HUNTER

February 19, 2024

### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I write in support of the Train to Cessnock initiative and their proposal that the NSW Government seeks to; acquire the existing rail corridor between Maitland and Bellbird, upgrade the corridor to passenger standard and introduce a passenger service on the line as a matter of priority. This proposal is set out in “The Case for the Train to Cessnock.”

I am advised that this rail corridor is no longer being used by its owners for coal transport and without intervention will degrade and deteriorate. However, with timely action this corridor could be used to provide a vital function for the community of Cessnock and the broader Hunter region which I represent as the Federal Member for Hunter.

The Cessnock community currently has limited access to public transport: the 2021 Census showed that 0.5% of people in this area used either bus or train to get to work. This is not a sustainable situation for NSW’s second-fastest growing LGA. Forecasting released by Cessnock Council now predicts that Cessnock LGA’s population will increase by 60% in the period to 2041. The Train to Cessnock would allow our area to prosper and continue to contribute to the NSW and Australian economy, it would fill a much needed transport gap.

The Train to Cessnock would also support many other National and State priorities, such as providing access to affordable housing, enhancing sustainability, assisting with the transition to a zero carbon economy and reducing cost of living pressures.

As Federal Member for Hunter I support the Train to Cessnock initiative and their endeavours to have the NSW Government consider this important proposal. This would be a welcome project to our community and I look forward to assisting in any way I can to ensure a successful outcome.

Kind regards

Dan Repacholi MP  
***Federal Member for Hunter***

