

Country Alliance sets early aim for 2010 state election

The Country Alliance party, which contested its first state election last November, is now confident of an even stronger performance in the next election after a key meeting in Bendigo earlier this month.

Spokesperson Russell Bate, said that the party was buoyed by the strong support that it has continued to receive from its membership and the ongoing interest in its platform and policies.

Mr Bate confirmed that in accordance with legislative requirements, a review of the Party's registration by the Victorian Electoral Commission had recently been successfully completed. The review process required confirmation that the party had a minimum of 500 members.

"Thanks to the continued strong support of our membership we were able to satisfy this requirement in a matter of days rather than weeks. Coming so soon after the election and with the next election some years away this support was particularly gratifying and underscored the continuing appeal of the party's platform to rural and regional voters. We will remain a registered political party for as long as country people see a need for an effective alternative to the other parties and especially to the Greens."

"Country Victorians and an increasing number of suburban residents have become concerned about the more extreme policies of the Greens" he said.

"Policies that advocate the consolidation of farms, the introduction of an inheritance tax and the locking up of public land would have a disastrous effect on regional Victoria and were obviously one of the reasons why Green candidates were rejected in the three regional upper house seats. We were delighted that our preferences were directly responsible for denying the Green candidates success in at least two of these regions" he said.

Mr Bate said the meeting was a wide ranging review of the party's performance and will result in a stronger presence at the next election. Building the Party's branch structure will be a high priority.

"One of our strengths was the quality of our upper house candidates however it is clear that our good results would have been even better had we fielded lower house candidates as well."

"As a result we will be working hard to ensure that we will present quality candidates to contest both the upper and lower house seats at the next state election. To that extent, we would love to hear from anybody who is genuinely interested in representing their community".

For media comment contact Russell Bate

Website: www.countryalliance.org

Admin: admin@countryalliance.org / ph 0425 746 066

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