



**Barry O'Farrell MP**  
**NSW Liberal Leader**  
Shadow Minister for Western Sydney

**Andrew Stoner MP**  
**NSW Nationals Leader**  
Shadow Minister for Roads & Ports  
Shadow Minister for State Development

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **NSW LIBS & NATS COMMIT \$1 MILLION TO SECURE FUTURE OF YOUTH AND ROAD TRAUMA FORUM FOR FOUR YEARS**

A NSW Liberals & Nationals Government would provide \$1 million to fund the Youth and Road Trauma Forum for the next four years, NSW Opposition Leader Barry O'Farrell and Shadow Roads Minister Andrew Stoner announced today.

The Youth and Road Trauma Forum is a unique annual event aimed at vividly conveying the dangers and consequences of unsafe driving to high school students.

Mr O'Farrell made the announcement alongside forum organisers Julie Seggie and Stephanie Wilson, both Trauma Coordinators, and brain injury victims Paul Sheppard and Lina Polifrone at Westmead Hospital today.

"Young people account for 15 per cent of licence holders but represent more than a third of road fatalities – we are determined to change that," Mr O'Farrell said.

"Like other parents, I want to know my 16-year-old son is as well prepared as possible when he drives solo for the first time.

"With our support, 48,000 young people will attend the Youth and Road Trauma Forum over the next four years – that means 48,000 young people will have listened to someone their age who has suffered a traumatic brain injury in a road accident share their experience."

The Youth and Road Trauma Forum provides students with:

- An understanding of their responsibilities as a driver and as a responsible passenger;
- Information and strategies to avoid serious injuries and death; and
- Information on how to reduce risk taking behaviour through greater awareness of the consequences of distracted driving, inattention, speeding, drink and drug driving, and driver fatigue.

Mr O'Farrell today made public an Access Economics report commissioned by The Balnaves Foundation, *Spinning out of control: The economic cost of road trauma in young people in NSW*.

"Securing the future of the Youth and Road Trauma Forum is just commonsense – the annual cost of providing it to 12,000 young people is the same cost as one young person hospitalised as a result of a car crash so this statistic alones makes the forum a worthwhile investment," Mr O'Farrell said.

Mr Stoner said the forum forces young people to consider the horrific impacts of car crashes, which many would not have previously considered despite sitting behind the wheel of a car.

"Sadly we know that even if a young person survives a crash, they may never complete school, have a career or family or live the life they had imagined due to severe head injuries, spinal trauma, loss of limbs or serious chest and abdominal injuries.

"It is certainly fitting that the forum is organised by Trauma Coordinators at Westmead Hospital Trauma Service who witness firsthand the horrific outcomes of car crashes.

"This million dollar commitment comes on top of *Safer Drivers*, the skills training course for young drivers announced in October last year.

"We will not stand idly by as so many young people are injured or die on our roads each year.

"For too long, Labor's road safety policy has focused almost entirely on filling their coffers with revenue from speeding fines.

"The NSW Liberals & Nationals understand that road safety needs to be more than simply a revenue-raising scheme and that is why we are investing in education for young people in NSW.

"We believe that better driver education will produce better drivers, and better drivers will make our roads safer."

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