Well, good morning, everyone. Thank you very much for that introduction. And it sounds like you've got a pretty big day. It's wonderful to be here at the executive leaders conference. Um, we are roomful of people who I really turn. Policy and objectives from our agencies, from our pilot into practical election for millions of Australians.

So I thank you your teams and your workforces in particular to Lorrie Leigh. And everybody at MBS, thank you for putting this on. It's wonderful to do a few things, get everybody together in an environment where you I think over my time in Parliament, which is a bit over 10 years now has Been a period of rapid change in almost constant change, and I think, Um the tool that that takes on your organisations, on the tool, that takes on your executive leadership teams and of course you workforces more, broadly something that I think is under estimated and underrated and the opportunity that the NDS provides to bring each and every one of you together to perhaps console one, another on some of the difficulties but more importantly work together on what's working for you in your organisations and how you can take that forward in your own is I think something that that makes this event really important each and every year and so Lorrie and to you and to your team.

I want to thank you particular, for the way that you engage with not just the government, but the opposition as well, which is something that we're, we're very grateful for to all the distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. Those people online. There's a couple of things I wanted to do today in in addressing you and Um, Obviously we've had the DRC, which as has just been noted.

Over 200 recommendations a huge report a lot to take in and I'm pleased that you've got a session. On that. We've obviously got the NDIS review that to some extent. We're still trying to work through it from an opposition perspective as well. Um, so the patient changes, huge. What I wanted to do was just give you a broad sense of Um, my perspectives on these issues from an opposition, and the way in which we will engage and work with at a times, hold the government to account on what they promised what they've committed to and what is not a straightforward pathway forward on both the DRC all the NDIS review, and then the sector more broadly.

And, I must say. I have a good relationship with the minister at a personal land at a professional level, but that doesn't mean a free kick or a free pass for the government or for him. And what area that I think has been spoken about a lot since the election is sustainability.

It's the They would that I think has been mentioned the most. Um, and to some extent is part of your theme of sustainability. Um, Before the election, it was Not an area that the opposition focused heavily on. Sustainability, in fact, we had a lot of criticism. Pointed in our direction.

From the then opposition about talking about the sustainability near the is Uh and so the fact that the government has spoken a lot of about sustainability and it's tough title, its way into me in the eyes review. I think highlights the point that what I'd like to see is oppositions need to say one thing before an election and the same thing after.

And that's what I'll be endeavouring to do in this space. But what area of sustainability that's never spoken about is, Not never spoken about the patch. Not spoken about enough in Canberra is the sustainability of your organisations. And all you need to do is open up the latest sustainability report.

From the NDS. That shows some pretty styling statistics. On average, your organisations are running down their capital. So capital you've built up for years has been slowly been diminished. More than a third of. Your organisations. Have made losses. And so, whilst on one hand, Um, we're going to work co-operatively with the government.

Particularly, with respect to the sustainability of the NDIS. It cannot be decoupled from the sustainability of the organisation to deliver those services. And I don't think enough is spoken about certainly from the government on the financial sustainability of those more than a third of the organisations who are in a loss position or indeed the additional third on top of that who, as I said, are running down their capital.

And so my, Recommendation into the NDS and to you. There's a collective organisation is whenever the government's talking about sustainability quite rightly. We don't disagree with it. Um, they've also got to be thinking about sustainability of your organisations. The issues you have to deal with, obviously the inflation repressions throughout the economy.

Workforce shortages, it's quite remarkable to be frank that the sectors in the shape. That's in I think if somebody hadn't got a crystal ball out, Ten years ago and said, these are the succession of issues that the sector will be dealing with. Um, that you're in match better shape than I suspect.

Most people would have predicted that that's because In many respects, there's been a remarkable effort. So again on sustainability, We can't decouple sustainability of the NDIS or the broader. Broader disability framework from the sustainability of your organisations. That's the first point. I want to make Secondly. What I wanted to really emphasise with you today is, There's a shadow minister.

I'm not going to try and needlessly find areas. To fight with the government in this space. Um, I've said this to build personally, I think that was one of the mistakes he made in opposition. Should I think there were times where No doubt, he picked a fire because he believed in it, but I do believe there are other times where he picked differences in pig fights.

For political purposes, and I'm not going to pretend to be pure as the driven snow here. But I don't think this is the sector that we do that. And so often met we built. Met with Bruce and Lisa and really emphasised that where we can agree where there are broad strokes of reform that are sensible.

We're going to back the government. Now, it doesn't mean a free kick on everything, it doesn't mean that there won't be some criticism on the way through, but our starting point will be How do we facilitate? In the best way and in the best interests of your users. Um, the reforms where they a sensible, where we agree with you philosophically.

And based on what I saw in the NDIS review, I think we're off to a good start. Subject to that caveat on sustainability. I think there needs to be more of an emphasis on your sustainability as organisations. But subject to that, The concept of Um, getting greater volume from our states and territories.

From a financial perspective. Uh, we can wholeheartedly agree with. Um, where we have? Concerns that I think those concerns will need to be fleshed out over the coming months will be with respect to some of the more titanic changes that are being in there that have been announced with respect to foundational supports.

Um, And there's a range of areas where I think the implementation will ultimately be the devil in the detail. And I, I am comforted by The approach of Bruce and Lisa as far as and the whole team in ensuring that that implementation has the sector has organisations and people bodies like NDS.

Are feeding directly into it. That gives me great comfort. Um, that will need to make sure that The action meets the rhetoric with respect that implementation. So if you think of it as getting through the, the first hurdle, From an opposition's perspective. Uh, we are broadly overview that we've got a set of recommendations.

And rhetoric from the government. But subject to implementation that lives up to those expectations. We can in most cases, broadly support. And the reason I wanted to send that message to you today was not to try and be missed a nice guy. Any of you who know me politically know, that's probably not my natural inclination. But I think is a sector and I'm coming to this with relatively fresh eyes. That the rancour and the constant evolution and revolution of the sector. To some extent. All the revolution, at least needs to cease. Now, we're coming into an election cycle. In Australia elections are probably, they're probably a curve far too often at a federal level.

So, we're getting into an election cycle, you're probably feel like you've all just taken a deep breath from the last one. Uh, and what I didn't want going into this election cycle was a sense of anxiety or stress amongst you and your organisations, That the opposition that our view will be well, we're going to junk everything before us and start again. Where we can? And I think we're off to a decent start where we can. We think that there's enough Uh, really worthy reform outlined in the NDIS review that we can work with in a forward implementation sense, irrespective of what happens.

Village. And what I saw are coming to this with a relatively fresh pair of eyes. I was always sitting on the other side of the table. In the former government, I was amongst many other portfolios assistant treasurer. And I was always sitting on the side of the table with an NDIS minister, who would come to our ERC (expenditure review committee) and it almost every case was asking for billions. More in funding. And it would be remiss of me, not to Uh defend that legacy that I can assure you each and every time that NDIS minister came to the table and asked for more money. The economic team in the coalition found that money.

And the scheme, though imperfect as it is, is a scheme that we took to all at half a million Australians. A scheme with. All the issues that we hope that the NDIS review will deal with Provided immense, dignity, and support for more than half a million Australians and their families.

And that's something we're very proud of in the coalition. And I think we're rightly proud of that. So I'm here today to give you those assurances, and in doing so, I have a request Um, in opposition, you don't have the benefit of Um, big. Uh, Times of intelligent public servants to give you the latest data, the latest translators issues.

And I just invite each and every one of you and your organisations. In this implementation journey with respect to the NDIS review, particularly Um, I would be very grateful, of course Lorrie and her team in NDS already do this but I would appreciate where you think things might be going off track or have the propensity potentially to go off track or where your voices are not being heard.

Um, my door’s always open to hear from you. Um, selfishly as much as anything because you are the subject matter experts. And if we hear from you, that I'm going to be more able to prosecute those issues. So even though we're through that first hurdle of the review, I think the rubber hits the road now with implementation.

In that process, I want to be a partner with you and a voice in the parliament, at the very least. Uh, to ensure that it ultimately meets the objectives that we all hope. So, um, thank you all for having me here this morning. I understand yet a big function last night, so um, the coffee cut probably was pretty necessary, but I do appreciate the engagement.

I've had with many of you today and want to just reaffirm That I'm not here to find differences with the government, but I'm very happy to hold them into account and I suspect that they will need that. Uh, in these very Uh, important journey over the next six months, as we start putting in the building blocks, For the future of the NDIS post review.

So again, thank you for having me. Thank you to everybody who's contributed this wonderful. Uh, latest conference. And I look forward over the next few months to hopefully speaking to as many of you as possible. Thank you very much.

Thank you.