

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



**DELIVERING
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Sunday, 1 September 2018

VICTORIA: THE BASKETBALL CAPITAL OF AUSTRALIA

Victoria will cement its position as Australia's basketball capital with the National Basketball League's (NBL) new ninth team to be based in Melbourne, along with a massive expansion of basketball programs and facilities under a re-elected Andrews Labor Government.

Premier Daniel Andrews today joined basketballers at the State Basketball Centre at Knox Regional Sports Park to announce the new team and a \$126 million package to grow basketball from the grassroots to elite level.

The new NBL team will be a Melbourne team with its headquarters and training at the Knox Regional Sports Park in Melbourne's outer eastern suburbs. The team's name will be announced by the NBL.

A re-elected Labor Government will deliver a massive expansion of basketball facilities at Knox. This will include training and administration facilities for the new Melbourne NBL team and upgraded facilities for Women's National Basketball League (WNBL) team, the Deakin Melbourne Boomers, who are based there.

It will also include 10 new community courts for local basketball competitions in Melbourne's growing south-east.

Labor will also build a new home for the Australian Basketball Centre of Excellence at Knox as part of the \$107 million expansion project, with Basketball Australia relocating their training facilities from Canberra.

A re-elected Labor Government will provide \$82 million towards the expansion project, with Knox City Council to contribute the remaining \$25 million.

Labor will also invest \$5 million to establish seven new high-performance basketball hubs around the state. These hubs will provide young players with elite basketball training programs, allowing them to train at the highest level in their local area with a clear pathway to playing top level basketball in Australia or the American NBA.

A re-elected Labor Government will also invest \$13 million to upgrade Melbourne Arena, formerly Hisense Arena, to better cater for a range of sports, including basketball and netball.

Labor will also look to the future with \$1 million to develop a business case to build the Knox Arena, a new 6,000 to 8,000 seat stadium at Knox that would bring major sports and entertainment events to Melbourne's suburbs.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"Victoria is the home of basketball - more people hit the court here each week than in any other state and only Labor will help basketball keep growing in Victoria from the grassroots to elite level."

"That means new courts and better facilities for local clubs or if your kids dream of playing for Australia or the NBA - we'll give them a pathway to get there."

Quote attributable to Minister for Sport John Eren

"This will boost community and women's sport with more local courts and better women's facilities at Knox, and a clear pathway for girls to one day play for Australia or the WNBL through the training hubs around the state."

Quote attributable to Australian Basketball Legend Lauren Jackson

"This announcement is fantastic support for basketball and in particular it's pleasing to know the facilities and game day experience for our elite athletes and fans alike is being catered for. At the Deakin Melbourne Boomers

Media contact: Lisa Maksimovic 0421 597 669 | lisa.maksimovic@minstaff.vic.gov.au

we are striving to elevate girls and women in basketball and this exciting development will go a long way to doing this.”