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**E&OE TRANSCRIPT
DOORSTOP
MITCHAM
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SUBJECTS: Labor's positive plan for Australia

BILL SHORTEN, LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: Good morning everybody. Great to be here in Mitcham with Shireen Morris, and of course my remarkable Deputy, Tanya Plibersek.

The election has been called and today the case to vote Labor is that we will deliver more jobs, better health and education. Take real action on climate change and renewable energy and help push energy prices down. We'll get on top of cost of living burdens and we'll get wages moving again in this country. And, we can manage the economy in the interests of working and middle-class people because my team is united.

Australians face a real and vital choice at this election. Do you want Labor's energy versus the Government's tiredness? Labor's focus on the future versus being stuck in the past? Labor's positive plan for all Australians or a negative fear campaign from the other side? Do you want a united government under Labor or another three years of division following the last six years of division under the current Government.

So these are important choices; energy, positive, future focused and united. You know, my political philosophy is very straight forward. What we believe in, is making sure that the economy works in the interests of working and middle-class people. When everyday Australians are getting a fair go, then this economy hums. We get good jobs, not just casualised labour hire, part-time jobs.

We want to see the cost of living genuinely tackled. The biggest problem in Australia right now, is that everything is going up except people's wages. We also want to make sure that women get a fair go in our society. You know, we can over-complicate politics sometimes. Politics is about people and it's about family and it's about health. What Labor wants to do is we understand that Australians want to hand on a better deal to the generation to come after them, than the one they inherited.

That's why we're going to hand on a better deal with a world-class education system. From pre-school to schools to TAFE - 150,000 places - to universities. And we want to hand on a better environment than the one we currently have by taking real action on climate change. We want to make sure that we hand on a better deal to our kids when it comes for them to be able to afford to buy their first home, rather than favouring property investors buying their fifth or sixth property.

And of course, there's no issue any more important to Australians than their health. If your family's health is okay and your health is okay then everything else is possible. If you've got a challenge with your health then everything else tends to take second place.

That's why Labor believes so much in our Medicare system. We don't just want to have the world's best system of healthcare, we want to keep it the world's best system. What we want to do is invest in our hospitals and reverse the cuts. We want to make sure that our frontline of healthcare services, our GPs are properly resourced. We want to make sure that people who suffer from mental health illness that they get the support they require. We want to make sure that our age care system is genuinely looking after people as they grow older.

And of course, when it comes to health, there's no bigger battle than when you or a beloved one receives a diagnosis of cancer. Cancer makes you sick, but it shouldn't make you poor. That's why Labor has a vision to walk alongside people when they are in the terrifying battle of their lives. People shouldn't be drowning in thousands and thousands of out-of-pocket costs merely because a government doesn't properly fund cancer Medicare. So when you look at Labor's vision for Australia, it's an inclusive vision, we can deliver an inclusive vision which tackles inequality, which makes sure that your postcode or how much money you have in the bank doesn't become the sole predictor of how you fare in life.

We want the very best for this generation and the next generation and we can deliver this because we've done the work. I think even our harshest critics would concede that we've been united for the last six years and that's what the Australian people want. They want one Prime Minister for three years, they don't

want a revolving door of politicians being consumed by themselves. For me this election is very straightforward, it's a choice about being stuck in the past or a brighter future.

It's about having a positive view of what Australians can do together rather than a negative view telling us to be afraid of each other. It's about handing on a better deal for the future, than the one that we've inherited from the past. The last six years hasn't been Australia's finest six years, there's been instability, growing inequality, there's been wages stagnation, everything going up but your wages, energy prices up, the cost of going to see the doctor or seeing a specialist, the cost has gone up. What we need to do is make sure that this country is working in the interests of everyone, not just the top end of town.

We've made serious reform decisions, to make sure that multinationals pay their fair share of tax. Australians are sick and tired of the big companies doing better and better and better, treating tax as an option, whereas everyday small businesses and medium-sized businesses or pay as you go tax payers, they just got to pay what they're meant to pay and they don't have the option - they don't have the choice of opting out of our tax system.

Australia is a great country and we can make it an even greater country, if we make sure that no one gets left behind. This election is about you, the Australian people, it's about you, your family, your health. Labor has got a plan because we're united, we have a vision and we've got a talented team. If you are dissatisfied with the last six years, if you want better than the last six years, if you want a fair go for all Australians, if you want a government who is united and not constantly trying to tear each other down, then vote Labor on May 18.

Thank you very much.

JOURNALIST: Mr Shorten, you've arrived at a seat with a margin of 6.4 per cent, that suggests that you see yourself as a clear front runner, is that how you see it?

SHORTEN: Not at all, what this suggests is that I get what's going on in Australian families. We have made a conscious decision to start the 2019 campaign in the family lounge-room of an everyday Australian family; two kids, two marvellous handsome little boys going to the local public school, both parents are working. They're not complaining, they know this is a good country, they're paying off their mortgage. They're doing everything they can do to provide the best opportunity for their kids.

But this election isn't about the personalities, it can't be about the back-biting and the division. You know what people hate about politics? It's that too many

politicians are consumed by themselves, too puffed up about their own identities and they're not thinking enough about the people.

This election is about the people of Australia; it's about the cost of living, it's about wages stagnation, it's about doing something about energy prices, it's about making sure that we hand on a better deal to our kids when it comes to climate change. It's about education, every parent in Australia, every aunt and uncle, every neighbour works hard and they want to make sure the kids get the best start. That's why we want to properly fund our public schools. And of course, this election is about health care. Do you know, we over-complicate politics sometimes - that's all of us; the politicians, the media. What we need to understand is what matters to millions of our fellow Australians is their family and their health.

Labor's got a plan to tackle the cost of living. We've got a plan to get wages moving again. We've got a plan to take real action on climate change which will lead to great investment in renewables and downward pressure on power prices. We've got a plan for the health care system of Australia. I couldn't be prouder of my united Labor team when we outlined our vision to walk alongside people in the terrifying battle against cancer. One in two Australians will get a diagnosis of cancer. Cancer makes you sick, but it shouldn't make you poor. We are going to deliberately put much more money than ever before into our health system rather than sustain unsustainable tax subsidies to the fortunate few.

It's all about choices this election. I choose better treatment for cancer and cheaper treatment for cancer than bigger tax loopholes for multinationals or more unsustainable tax subsidies for the fortunate few. It's all about choices. That's why we are here in middle east-suburb of Melbourne, Mitcham with a family who are fair dinkum because this is who this election is about. It's about Jacqui and Richard Davis and their boys.

JOURNALIST: Mr Shorten, will this family be affected by Labor's negative gearing policy?

SHORTEN: No. And let's also be clear: anyone who currently invests in property and they make a loss and get tax subsidy paid for by everybody else, they're the current tax rules - the changes will not affect them. Our changes are prospective.

But I tell you how this family will be positively affected by us reforming the tax system, by us deciding that a person buying their tenth house is not more important than a first home-buyer. And it will affect this family positively: there will be more money for their children's education, there will be more money when their children are sick and need to go to the hospital, there will be more

support for their parents in aged-care, there will be more support in the community to make sure we can help put downward pressure on energy by investing in renewables. It's all about a choice. The Government choose to defend tooth and nail, to the very bitter end, people who can afford to buy 10 properties and claim a subsidy from the Government. I chose to fight for the future, I choose to fight for families, I choose to fight for cost of living. My feet are firmly planted in the backyard of a Mitcham house because I understand that politics should be about the people, it's about the cost of living, education, health, good jobs, renewable energy.

JOURNALIST: It was reported today...

SHORTEN: I might just, I want to share a couple more questions and then we will finish up for this one, we will have plenty of time to chat with us on the campaign.

JOURNALIST: It was reported today that Queensland MPs were gagged from talking to the media about Adani, would you pledge to enable them to have a full and frank debate about the mine?

SHORTEN: I think we need to be full and frank about the mine, that's why I don't think it's any particular coincidence that the Government went to the Governor General today on the day they were going to the CSIRO was going to be examined about its report into the Adani mine.

You want to talk about gagging? What a coincidence the Government rather than facing the scrutiny of Parliament about the fairly politicised and bullying process of mine approvals has instead decided that today they want to have the election, that is what it is. The Labor party's united, if you want to look at disunity look at the current Government, I don't want to spend today actually talking about the current Government too much. My people are free to speak that's not the problem. The real issue is, do you want united government in the future? One comment I got right across the summer, people would come up to you and say "I have been a lifelong Liberal, like some of your policies, don't like others, but I'm contemplating voting for Labor this time, because the current Government just can't get over the fact they all hate each other".

People are sick of politics as usual, my challenge, and your earlier question I will finish on this note. You said: "*is Labor the front runner?*" We are competitive but my obligation and my pressure I don't feel comes from the Government so much as fulfilling the faith of the people. A lot of Australians think the system is broken. They think it is all just a fix and everyone is in it for themselves. I and my team and the remarkable, Tanya Plibersek and the rest of my colleagues, and Shireen running in Deakin, Shireen Morris, running in

Deakin. We are motivated by a better future for Australia. We are hungry to do the best we can for the country. I can't guarantee voters that Labor will be successful, that's in the hands of the people. But I can guarantee the Australian people I am going to work my very hardest in the next 37 days as I have for the last 2000-plus days to organise proper ideas, to put a plan of social and economic improvement in front of Australian people, I think Australians deserve better than the last six years of politics and I'm prepared to offer them that vision.

Thank you everybody and see you on the trail.

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