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Matt Kean
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MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 23 March 2022

COVID-19 REFORMS PROMISE \$2.4 BILLION IN ECONOMIC BENEFITS

A raft of temporary regulatory measures introduced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic have now been made permanent, in a move that will provide \$2.4 billion of net economic benefits over the next decade.

These positive reforms, designed to support businesses and communities to operate flexibly throughout the pandemic, were originally set to expire from March 2022.

Acting Premier Paul Toole said it was critical to make permanent these changes as we emerge from a tough couple of years so that the economy comes back stronger than ever.

“NSW continues to lead the way through the COVID-19 recovery, and we’ll continue our record support so that more businesses re-open, jobs are filled and communities are buzzing again,” Mr Toole said.

Treasurer Matt Kean said when the pandemic struck it was clear that a business-as-usual approach from Government would not be enough to help people continue to run businesses, do their jobs, and access critical goods and services efficiently.

“These practical measures allowed the community to adapt through this period of disruption. Now as we emerge from a challenging two years, we are securing the benefits of these changes permanently to help rebuild the economy,” Mr Kean said.

“Retaining these changes permanently will provide net economic benefits of \$2.4 billion over the next decade through greater flexibility and time savings.”

The temporary changes made permanent include:

- More flexibility for strata owners’ corporations, community land associations and incorporated associations to meet and vote electronically;
- Allowing planning panels and the Independent Planning Commission to hold public hearings and meetings online or in person;
- Greater flexibility for employees and businesses to access long service leave under the Long Service Leave Act 1955; and
- Allowing audio link or audio-visual link to conduct interviews and questioning remotely.

Minister for Planning Anthony Roberts said the NSW Productivity Commission’s White Paper recommended retaining COVID-19 changes if they deliver net benefits.

“These changes, combined with the resilience, creativity and determination of our people and businesses, mean that our State will be in a better and stronger position to recover and flourish,” Mr Roberts said.

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