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**State Member of Parliament for
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Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE USE

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Sheed Calls for Easing of Restrictions in the Regions

Independent Member for Shepparton District Suzanna Sheed says she has written to the Premier throwing her support behind the calls from many others in regional Victoria to move towards an easing of restrictions in our regional areas.

In doing so she has pointed out that she receives communications every day from a range of community and business people who have been affected by current restrictions and are looking to reopen their businesses. Gymnasiums and fitness centres, dance studios and children's play centres are now ready to open safely and are desperate to do so.

"Members of the clergy have contacted me directly and are most anxious to be able to meet with greater numbers of their congregation together again. Broadcasting of services has been difficult with so few people able to be present to arrange the broadcasts. Our churches provide a range of services and support to so many people in our community who have had to remain very isolated over recent months. To be able to attend larger gatherings and socialise again would be an enormous benefit to their physical, mental and emotional well-being," Ms Sheed said.

"While Shepparton experienced an outbreak in early August with two clusters of coronavirus being identified, the decentralisation of contact tracing to GV Health meant that it was quickly brought under control and it is now weeks since we have had an active case in the Shepparton.

Business owners are ready to activate their businesses to the fullest extent possible and service their communities again," she said.

Ms Sheed maintains that with school students now returning from remote learning back into schools many regional Victorians should be able to return to their offices and places of work.

"Here in regional Victoria we do not have many of the issues associated with multistorey buildings, lifts and escalators and other factors that are relevant in workplaces in Melbourne. It would be possible for many workers to return to their workplace and with COVID-19 work plans, to safely do so," Ms Sheed said.

ENDS

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