

Dr Marisa Paterson MLA

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBIDGEE

MEDIA RELEASE

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Canberra – a National Park City?

Dr Marisa Paterson MLA will this week call on the ACT Government to explore whether Canberra should apply to become a National Park City.

Dr Paterson was dismayed by images of Parliament House being used nationally and internationally to spruik Canberra's recent honour of being named the world's most sustainable city.

"We are *more than* Parliament House" said Dr Paterson. "And the policies and actions that contribute to our sustainability do not arise from federal politics or from the house on the hill. They arise from the great work undertaken by the ACT Government, and by local businesses, organisations and individuals".

"It's time for Canberra to divorce Parliament House" Dr Paterson said.

Dr Paterson recognises that marketing over the last 10 years or more, including Brand CBR and Visit Canberra's 'One good Thing' and 'More Than' campaigns, have done much to improve Canberra's image, identity and sense of pride. However, she also believes that "seeking to become a National Park City would further reposition Canberra and provide opportunity to sing the praises and celebrate all that Canberra has to offer as a city in the landscape, where people and nature are intertwined".

National Park Cities provide a framework, vision and narrative for those cities where government, business, not-for-profit and the community come together to achieve shared goals towards clean air, green spaces, outdoor recreation, health and wellbeing, wildlife and habitat protection, and sustainable initiatives, activities and projects.

To date, London is the world's only National Park City. Dr Paterson believes Canberra has all the requisite qualities.

"Canberra offers an unparalleled intersect between urban living and natural environments. We have some incredibly inspiring groups, individuals, businesses and organisations already doing great work in this space.

"This Saturday 5 June is World Environment Day – an opportune time to reflect on the importance of our green spaces, urban forest canopy and tree cover, all of which are going to become increasingly critical as the ACT continues to work on our climate action agenda".

National Park City status for Canberra would add credentials to our marketing campaigns, our sense of identity, place and pride. It would challenge us to further our aspirations to be a national leader on climate action.

Dr Paterson has called on the ACT Government to engage with the local community to identify the level of support.

Statement ends

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