



# Media Release

2 July 2020

## **G21 calls on Treasurer to keep ATO in Geelong**

G21 calls on the federal government to retain its Australian Taxation Office presence in Geelong to help the region's post-COVID economic recovery and honour its commitment to government agency decentralisation.

G21 CEO Elaine Carbines conveyed her Board of Directors' concerns about plans to relocate the ATO office from Geelong to Treasurer the Hon Josh Frydenberg by letter.

G21 CEO Elaine Carbines said the proposed relocation of at least 160 ATO jobs from the Geelong region to Melbourne in mid 2021 was "illogical, especially in the current environment".

"The Geelong Australian Taxation Office has long been one of our vital local public sector employers and is currently employing 161 members of our community," Ms Carbines said.

"We are dismayed by a proposal under active consideration to close the Geelong ATO with the loss of these jobs.

"The Treasurer is of course well aware of the impact of COVID-19 on employment opportunities in regional Australia. Geelong is no exception, having been economically hard hit by the pandemic.

"We are imploring the Treasurer to intervene and stop the closure of the Geelong ATO and avoid the consequential local job losses to Geelong.

"The federal government has previously stated its support for decentralising its agencies to regional areas. This proposed move by the ATO seems to fly in the face of government commitments.

"G21 is a strong supporter of the decentralisation of government. Geelong has an excellent reputation for hosting decentralised government agencies.

"Geelong is the headquarters of several federal agencies – the National Disability Insurance Agency and Australian Bureau of Statistics Centre of Excellence.

“Geelong also hosts the headquarters of state agencies - the Transport Accident Commission and WorkSafe.

“We understand a final decision on the Geelong office relocation is to be made in the next month or so, so this needs the Treasurer’s urgent intervention.”

The G21 letter to Treasurer Frydenberg was also copied to Geelong-based Senator the Hon Sarah Henderson.

***Media contact:***

*G21 CEO Elaine Carbines AM*

*(03) 5227 4000 office or 0437 202 300 mobile*