



Hon. Mike Rann MP
Premier of South Australia

The Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Education, Employment
and Workplace Relations
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir / Madam

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Senate Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Committee inquiry into the *Primary Schools for the Twenty First Century (P21)* program.

The attached submission outlines the South Australian Government's approach to management of the P21 program at the State level and acknowledges the significant positive impact the program is having on South Australian schools and on our economy.

From the outset, the South Australian Government has fully supported the Australian Government's efforts to mitigate the worst effects of the Global Financial Crisis through the *Nation Building-Economic Stimulus Plan*, including the P21 program.

P21 has played a crucial role in providing work to the construction sector in South Australia at a time of declining private sector building activity. It has provided positive flow on benefits for associated supply chains, assisted in stabilising employment, and is building community capacity across the State. It will also provide benefits to students and the education system for many years to come through the provision of social infrastructure that supports better learning outcomes.

While South Australia has experienced better than expected economic conditions, the timing of the anticipated recovery in private sector construction activity is still uncertain. Therefore, the untimely withdrawal of the Federal Government's economic stimulus package, or any of its components, including P21, would have significant consequences for the economy.

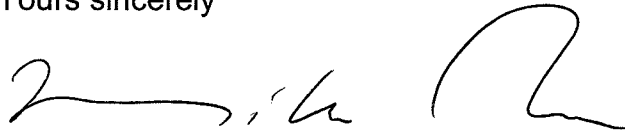
It is critical that this initiative continue to be implemented and resourced as originally planned. Builders have made commitments to staff based on their expectations of the full three phases of the program and schools that are involved in the latter phases of the program should not be disadvantaged.

This inquiry provides a significant opportunity to review and highlight the substantial benefits this program has provided for the Australian and State economies, and for education in Australia. It also provides an opportunity to ensure that we build on these achievements to further cement our nation's economic position in the face of continuing global uncertainty.

Certainly in South Australia we have demonstrated that it is possible to implement this program efficiently and cost-effectively with the best possible outcomes for the economy and for schools.

The South Australian Government believes that it is essential that the *P21* program continues, in its current form and we remain well positioned to efficiently facilitate the program through to its completion.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Rann', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

MIKE RANN
Premier

21 / 10 / 2009