MEDIA RELEASE

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OUR COASTAL TOWNS ARE OFF LIMITS TO TOURISTS THIS EASTER

Easter 2020 is one year tourists are being asked to stay at home, rather than travelling to the Mid North Coast.

Today local Members of Parliament and police are reminding residents in metropolitan Australia to observe health directives and stay at home this Easter in order to protect the region’s elderly and vulnerable residents.

“We love our tourists, but this year we need to prioritise the protection of our residents,” Mr Conaghan said.

“The simple fact is people cannot travel to holiday here without contravening the NSW Government’s Public Health (COVID-19 Restrictions on Gathering and Movement) Order 2000. Penalties for breaching the Order are up to six months’ gaol time or a fine of up to $11,000.

“The Public Health Order specifically states travelling to take a holiday in a regional area is not a reasonable excuse for people to leave their residence and it’s just not on.”

Member for Oxley Melinda Pavey said people need to abide by the rules as they are designed to keep the whole community safe.

“Please put community interest first and self-interest second; now is not the time to travel to our area for a holiday or even to relocate yourselves for a longer period,” Ms Pavey said.

“There could be serious health consequences for vulnerable* members of our community if they were exposed to COVID-19.”

Mid North Coast Police District Commander Superintendent Paul Fehon said police will be carrying out patrols this weekend to ensure social distancing is maintained.

“The vast majority of people understand the risk of this virus to our communities, although there has been a level of complacency in recent days,” Superintendent Fehon said.
“With Easter approaching we will increase our vigilance to ensure social distancing is maintained and compliance relating to persons leaving homes for non-essential reasons.

“Police are there to support the safety and wellbeing of the whole community at this time of the coronavirus pandemic.”


*Research recently conducted by the Australian National University Centre for Social Research Methods found residents in several towns within the electorate of Cowper were health disadvantaged and were therefore more vulnerable to the risks of COVID-19.

The study analysed the number of residents living in aged care facilities and health data and found there are a high proportion of residents in Nambucca Heads, Macksville and Kempsey with chronic health issues known to make the effects of COVID-19 worse.

ENDS

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