



EXTRACT FROM  
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

***HANSARD***



***Ms WILLIAMS***  
***Dandenong***

***MEMBERS STATEMENTS***

***South-east Melbourne soccer team***

***Thursday, 25 May 2017***

### **South-east Melbourne soccer team**

**Ms WILLIAMS** (Dandenong) — A few weeks ago I attended the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the City of Greater Dandenong, Casey council and Cardinia shire as part of their pitch for Team 11, a new A-League soccer team representing Melbourne's south-east. We are very fortunate to have Vince Grella as our Team 11 ambassador, a former Socceroo and a proud son of the south-east.

Unlike other metro regions in Victoria, the south-east has no elite representation in any major football code, and this needs to change. Soccer is far and away the most popular sport in what is the most populous region in the state. Greater Dandenong is the most multicultural region in Victoria, and among the many wonderful things our migrant communities have brought to Australia is the love of soccer. And for those of us born in Australia into Australian Football League or even rugby-loving households, soccer is gaining traction fast. It truly is the world game.

Football Federation Australia will soon make a decision about where the next A-League team will be based. I want to put on record in this place my view, well supported by all key indicators, that the south-east is the natural home for Team 11. The broader region is home to 1.24 million people and is one of the fastest growing populations in the country, and we cannot forget that our outer south-eastern suburbs are the gateway to Gippsland, opening up a greater potential fan base through the broader south-eastern region. And not only do we have the most to give, we have the most to gain. An A-League team and the economic benefits flowing from it could transform some of our struggling communities, creating much-needed jobs and promoting even greater harmony among cultures — uniting people through the love of team, through a new sporting identity.

I will be making this case wherever and whenever I can. I look forward to working with colleagues across all levels of government, with the community and with the business sector in the hope of making this great dream a reality.