

**LYNDA VOLTZ MP
LABOR SHADOW MINISTER FOR SPORT**

**BARILARO NEEDS TO FOCUS ON GRASSROOTS SPORTS - NOT BIG
END**

The NSW Labor Opposition has called on the Berejiklian Government to prioritise assistance for grassroots sports across the state ahead of a return to competition by the NRL.

Deputy Premier John Barilaro has offered the Berejiklian Government support for the NRL's return and to act as a conduit between the NRL and the Government. This is despite the NRL reportedly securing a \$250 million bank loan overnight.

Meanwhile voluntary sporting clubs and organisations are suffering, particularly in regional NSW, as a result of COVID-19 restrictions.

The NSW Liberal-National Government is yet to announce any form of assistance for the local sports sector, where covering insurance costs, allowing clubs and organisations to retain redeemed Active Kids voucher payments and facilitating grants from local governments for venue and sports field hire would make a significant difference.

Labor Shadow Minister for Sport Lynda Voltz said: "Mr Barilaro should stop being a cheer squad for the NRL and start focusing on the volunteers and administrators of grassroots sport."

"It's time John Barilaro stopped cosyng up to the big end of town and started helping local sport across NSW," Ms Voltz said.

"While he spends his time as a conduit for a major sporting organisation, local clubs and organisations in NSW, particularly in the regions, are facing significant stress and uncertainty."

This is particularly true in regional NSW where sporting organisations are still waiting for the NSW Government drought relief to sport which was announced in November but still has not been delivered.

"There are easy and practical ways for state government to assist grassroots sport, like covering \$4 million of insurance costs and allowing clubs and organisations to retain already redeemed Active Kids vouchers," Ms Voltz said.

"We're still waiting for any announcement by the NSW Liberal-National Government about how they're going to support grassroots sport through this crisis."

WEDNESDAY, 15 APRIL 2020