

RESPONSE TO PETITION

Petition Number: 682
Petition Sponsored by: Anasina Gray-Barberio
Directed to: Gabrielle Williams MP
Tabled on: 14 October 2025

Petition Grievance:

The petition of certain citizens of the State of Victoria draws to the attention of the Legislative Council the absence of Sunday services on bus route 506 between Moonee Ponds, Brunswick and Westgarth. Bus route 506 also finishes early on Saturday, with the last Saturday service leaving Moonee Ponds at 6.00 pm.

Buses provide the only east-west public transport in Melbourne's inner north. Bus route 506 connects people to shops and services at Moonee Ponds, Sydney Road, Lygon Street and Westgarth. Local demographics are mixed, and housing density is increasing.

Bus route 506 once had a Sunday service, but this was cancelled in the 1970s or 1980s. Sunday trading has since become widespread and there is now high weekend traffic and parking congestion. However, the Sunday service on the 506 bus was not restored. Usage of a restored Sunday service is likely to be high. A significant proportion of residents and visitors use public transport across the week. On an average boardings per hour basis, bus route 506 is Melbourne's busiest six-day bus route with its Saturday usage higher than all but a few seven-day routes. Analysis has shown that Saturday usage is a good indicator of potential Sunday ridership.

Petition Action:

The petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Council call on the Government to restore Sunday services on bus route 506 and extend operating hours to at least 9.00 pm, seven days a week.

Reply:

The Allan Labor Government recognises the important role buses play in meeting the travel needs of people living in Melbourne's growing suburbs. Buses are a vital part of Victoria's integrated transport system, with around 400 regular bus routes servicing metropolitan Melbourne, and local bus networks operating in regional towns and cities.

Since launching Victoria's Bus Plan in June 2021, more than 122 local bus networks have been improved, giving Victorian communities access to more than 9,400 extra services each week.

As part of the 2025/26 State Budget, we are investing more than \$162 million into new and improved bus services, with a focus on connecting communities in Melbourne's growing suburbs to key local destinations including train stations, schools, health services, shops and employment. This includes investment into Melbourne's north, including:

- new and improved services for Wollert, which will see bus routes extended into growing estates in Wollert's north,
- more frequent bus services for Beveridge, and
- upgrading Route 536, travelling between Glenroy and Gowrie, to be a 7-day a week service.

Work to deliver these new bus services is well underway, with more details available closer to implementation.

These uplifts will join several other recent improvements made to northern bus networks. From 5 October 2025, bus services were boosted around Craigieburn, Donnybrook, Kalkallo and Roxburgh Park, with 641 extra weekly services added across eight bus routes. This included extending Route 543 and Route 524, serving more residents in Greenvale North and Kalkallo, helping them get to work, the shops, and school. We also extended operating hours of Routes 525, 528, 529, 533, 537 in Craigieburn, with services now running late into the evening most days of the week.

In September, we upgraded Route 390, which connects passengers between Craigieburn and Mernda Stations. This upgrade saw 140 new weekly services for the route, providing consistent 20-minute weekday service from 6 am to 8 pm, and extending operating hours on weekdays and Saturdays until midnight.

Additionally, the upcoming opening of the Metro Tunnel provides an opportunity to review train service provision across the network. The 2025-26 Victorian State Budget provided \$98.7 million of new funding to increase train services across a large part of the network. For the Craigieburn and Upfield lines, this will increase services so that trains run at least every 20 minutes on both lines, including off peak, late at night and on weekends.

The Department of Transport and Planning regularly reviews the bus network to identify where improvements can be made. When reviewing existing bus routes or planning new ones, DTP considers several factors, including the number of users, suitability of the road network for bus operations, development of a direct and easily understood network, and connectivity with other public transport services.

Regarding Route 506, I acknowledge the strong community interest in having Sunday services and extended operating hours across the week. The route provides an important east-west service in the local bus network, and public feedback helps inform future planning and investment decisions. I have asked the Department of Transport and Planning to consider this request as part of future network planning.



Gabrielle Williams MP
Minister for Public and Active Transport