



PAUL FLETCHER MP

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LABOR FLOUNDERING ON REFORMS TO PREVENT DIGITAL IDENTITY THEFT

Labor has dropped the ball on the trusted digital identity framework and is now scrambling to catch up, Shadow Minister for Government Services and the Digital Economy, Paul Fletcher said today.

“Nearly five months after the election the Albanese Labor Government is finally convening a national meeting of data and digital ministers in the wake of the Optus data breach,” Mr Fletcher said.

“It shouldn’t have taken one of the largest privacy breaches in Australian history to convince the Labor government to organise a meeting of state and territory data and digital ministers.

“The Coalition Government established the Data and Digital Ministers’ Meeting in 2018 and convened 22 forums, including at the height of the pandemic. One of its core tasks was to collaborate on reforms to digital identity aimed at improving government service delivery and strengthening digital data protection.

“While the Optus data breach reminded Australians just how critical the security of their data is, the Albanese Government has treated digital services and data integrity as an afterthought.

“Having buried the Digital Transformation Agency deep in the bowels of the Finance Department, Labor has done little to progress the Coalition Government’s years of work on the digital identity scheme.

“A digital identity scheme is a crucial reform that will help prevent future thefts of identity data as occurred in the Optus case.

“Already Australians can use MyGovID to digitally establish their identity with federal government agencies and late last year the Coalition Government released draft legislation for consultation aimed at expanding this program to the private sector.

“The Coalition also reached agreement with the states and territories to actively explore adopting a national digital identity ecosystem.

“The Albanese Government’s failure to progress these important reforms has left a serious hole in our ability to protect Australians’ data and better improve digital services,” Mr Fletcher said.

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