

(In print as ‘Cranking up power’)

Sydney’s top business and education influencers get political over Powerhouse Museum move

[Anna Caldwell](#), The Daily Telegraph

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A POWERFUL group of Sydney’s biggest influencers in business and education has fired off a strongly worded letter urging Labor leader Luke Foley to back the move of the Powerhouse Museum to Parramatta.

The group of 30, including PwC, Deloitte, the Westmead Institute and major Western Sydney powerbrokers such as the Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, has also sent the letter to Premier Gladys Berejiklian, urging her not to take her foot off the pedal.

“It is long past time for the NSW Government to act,” the letter says.

And: “We believe that continued bipartisan support is crucial to this project being successful.”

Mr Foley has backflipped on his support for moving the museum, saying “a better plan” was a performance space.



A joint letter has been sent to Premier Gladys Berejiklian saying it is past time the NSW Government acted.



NSW Opposition Leader Luke Foley has also received a letter urging him to back the move. Picture: Joel Carrett

The full business case for the move is expected to be available to the upper house of parliament by 5pm today after government MP Matthew Mason-Cox crossed the floor and supported the opposition’s call to release the documents.

Other signatories to the letter, which has been driven by the Sydney Business Chamber, include property developers Walker, transport company Transdev, major waste management company Veolia, healthcare group Baxter and Parramatta Council.

Western Sydney Business Chamber boss David Borger said both sides of politics - needed to act to address the inequity faced by Western Sydney residents.

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Western Sydney Business Chamber boss David Borger. Picture: Joel Carrett

“It’s simply not good enough that Western Sydney only received just 1 per cent of Commonwealth arts program funding and 5.5 per cent of the NSW government’s art budget,” Mr Borger said.

“The NSW government needs to urgently release the business case and get on with the job of building this new cultural facility for Western Sydney — three years of waiting is long enough.”

The letter to both leaders says taxpayers spend more than four times as much money subsidising visitors to venues in Sydney’s CBD compared with Western Sydney.

Citing Deloitte data, the letter says: “Taxpayers spent an estimated \$112.50 on each visitor to the Australian Museum and \$74.93 for the Sydney Opera House.”

It says taxpayers invested about \$14 per visitor to Parramatta Riverside Theatres and \$6 per visitor to Penrith’s Joan Sutherland arts centre.