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MEDIA RELEASE

VICTORIAN STATE PARLIAMENT HAS FIRST MINISTER OF UKRAINIAN BACKGROUND

The Victorian Parliament has its first Minister of Ukrainian background

The Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organisations (AFUO) extends its congratulations to **Matthew Guy MP** Victoria's newly appointed Minister for Planning in the new Baillieu Cabinet. The Liberal Coalition won power in the recent Victorian State Elections

Australia's Ukrainian community is proud of the fact that a Victorian of Ukrainian background has achieved such high office.

Matthew's mother Vera comes from the Naumenko family, who settled in Newborough and have been active in their local community. Matthew's grandparents were instrumental in the growth of Association of Ukrainians in the Latrobe Valley.

"Matthew's hard work, energy, commitment and tireless efforts have now been rewarded," AFUO Chairman Stefan Romaniw OAM said today

"The community has watched Matthew grow into a formidable and mature politician, who has strong values and a culture of being focused on outcomes and encouraging others to be part of this process. Matthew has been accessible and supportive in Opposition not only to our community but to the broader community" Mr Romaniw said

"His commitment to the Ukrainian community in Australia and Victoria in particular should be noted. Mr Romaniw said

Matthew received the President of Ukraine's Award for his services to Ukraine and the Ukrainian community from President Victor Yushchenko in 2009.

Some of these included

- Advice and assistance with strategic planning and media exposure in the period of the *Orange Revolution*
- studying Ukrainian at Monash University
- political activity in ensuring the Holodomor (Famine in Ukraine in 1932-33) is recognised as genocide. His efforts are recorded in the Victorian Parliament's Hansard
- initiating annual visits to Ukraine of Victorian Members of Parliament

Australia's Ukrainian community wishes Minister Guy well in his role as Minister and trust his connection with the Ukrainian community will grow even stronger.

The AFUO also wishes his wife and young family the strength required in public life.

"There is an opportunity for Minister Guy to connect with a range of Members of Parliament in Canada and senior officials in other countries to form the first International MP's of Ukrainian background group", Mr Romaniw said

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