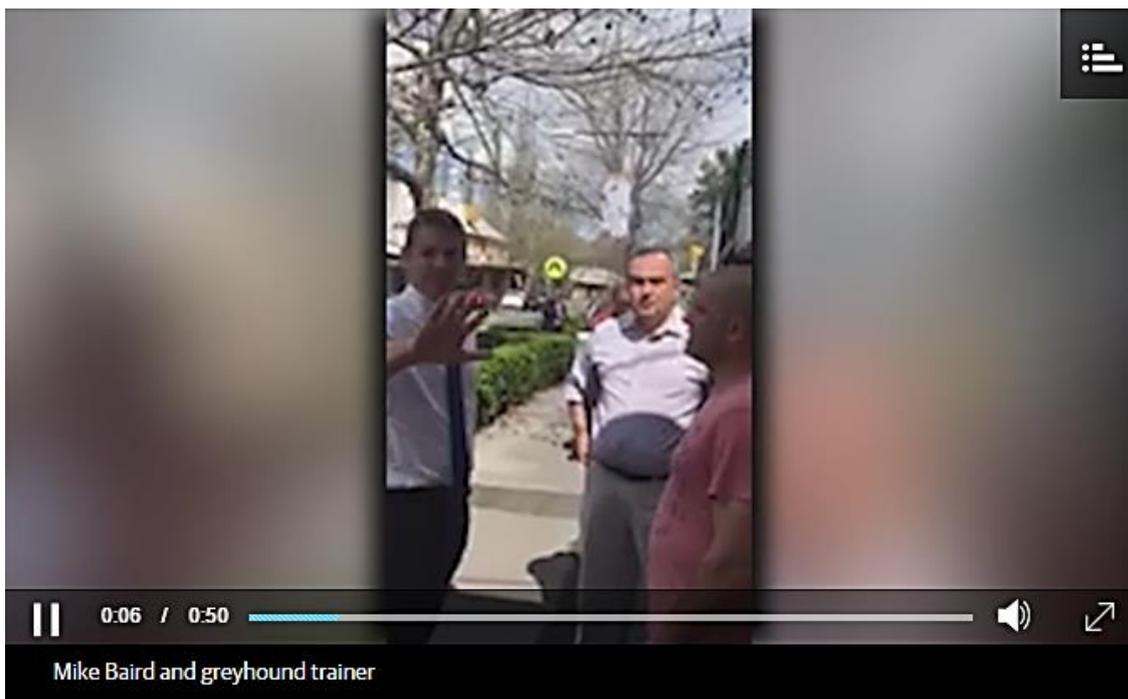


Baird in big trouble as by-election looms in Orange

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Andrew Clennell, State Political Editor

THE Baird government is in big trouble for the Orange by-election, with leaked Labor polling in the seat showing Transport Minister Andrew Constance has drawn level with Premier Mike Baird as preferred premier in a three-way race with Treasurer Gladys Berejiklian.



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- [Orange by-election: Nationals struggle to seat as greyhound ban bites](#)
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The Reachtel poll of 725 Orange voters, taken on Monday night, had the National Party's primary vote at just 34.6 per cent once undecided voters were pressed, with Labor at 27.5 per cent, the Shooters at 15.5 per cent, an independent Scott Munro at 11.5 per cent and others including the Greens at 11.



Trouble ahead... NSW Premier Mike Baird

With a primary vote of just 34.6 per cent, the Nationals face a real uphill fight to win the seat. Estimates by Reachtel have the Nationals ahead 52-48 if the Shooters vote was to split 50-50.

But, astonishingly, the poll shows that when voters were asked the question of who is the preferred premier, 39.6 per cent said Mike Baird, 39 per cent said Andrew Constance and 21.4 per cent nominated Ms Berejiklian.

Among National Party voters in the seat, that preferred premier rating for Mr Baird rose to 71 per cent.

But when asked to rank Mr Baird's performance, 32.5 per cent of all voters said it was very poor and 14.8 per cent said it was poor.

Twenty-two per cent said the Premier's performance was average, with 12.8 per cent saying good and 12.6 per cent "very good".

The November 12 by-election in Orange has been billed as a referendum on Deputy Premier Troy Grant's leadership in the wake of the greyhound racing industry ban.

The National Party won the seat 71-29 at last year's state election, with a primary vote of 65 per cent. The member Andrew Gee left state politics to successfully run for the federal seat of Calare.



Andrew Constance



Gladys Berejiklian

Labor needs a 21.6 per cent swing to win the seat but the average state by-election swing in NSW is 15 per cent.

The Daily Telegraph revealed yesterday that Deputy Premier Troy Grant had told colleagues that he would have to consider resigning if the Nationals lost Orange.

Asked yesterday at a press conference if he would go if he lost Orange, Mr Grant said “whatever will be, will be” out of the result.

“I’ll concentrate on delivering for Orange as I have for the rest of regional NSW,” Mr Grant said.

“I’m not someone to speculate ... I’m focused on the community and I know the community don’t want us focusing on ourselves and I’m not going to do that now.

“I’ll leave all those sorts of questions and matters for the party room ultimately.

“I have not told anybody that I will step down if we lose Orange.”



Troy Grant is said to have told colleagues he will consider resigning if the party is rolled at the Orange by-election on November 12.

<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/baird-in-big-trouble-as-byelection-looms-in-orange/news-story/68e2bd97658d19fa1063dd307fd297f6>