

The Labor Party has been driving a campaign bus from Cairns to Canberra. On Sunday night senator Sam Dastyari, leader of the “Bill Bus”, told supporters at a Canberra pub they had raised enough money to extend its journey through to Melbourne and would be leaving the next morning.

After giving a speech to the faithful, Dastyari tells Michelle Grattan they have been getting a lot of local media in small towns and that the reception has been “quite positive”.

“The irony of all this is what is old is new. And what we’re really doing is taking on board some really 1950s/1960s great Labor campaigns, great political campaigns. This is how we campaigned. And why did we campaign this way? Because people felt engaged, people felt like they were part of it. It helped tell a story,” he says.

While warning Labor can’t afford to be complacent in any state or territory, Dastyari emphasises the importance of New South Wales and Queensland for Labor at this election.

“In 2010, we lost a bunch of Queensland seats and in 2013, we lost a bunch of New South Wales seats. If we’re not picking up the bulk of the seats we need to win government out of New South Wales and Queensland, we will not be forming government.”

Michelle Grattan does not work for, consult, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organization that would benefit from this article, and has disclosed no relevant affiliations beyond the academic appointment above.

Read more <http://theconversation.com/election-podcast-sam-dastyari-on-the-bill-bus-59800>