



Airlines face double blow

FEARS FOR THE FUTURE: Member for Barker Patrick Secker has warned the Federal Government's removal of subsidies for regional flights could threaten the viability of Regional Express, which services the South East.



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FEDERAL Member for Barker Patrick Secker has warned a "double whammy" of Labor policies threatens to undermine the viability of Regional Express (REX) airlines.

Mr Secker said the removal of the enroute subsidy as well as the effects of carbon tax would push up airfares, making the airline unprofitable.

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will fold," he said.

"Regional Express airlines predicts the impact of the two Labor initiatives will be \$4m per year and rising."

Mr Secker said the government had been "ruthless" in its removal of the scheme.

"The Coalition was committed last elec-

tion to continuing the subsidy and we are still committed now," he said.

Mr Secker also warned the termination of the subsidy would also be felt by the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

Numbers of passengers have continued to drop at Mount Gambier airport over the last financial year, with the number of reported commuters around 92,000 - the lowest since 2004-05.

Meanwhile, Leader of the Nationals and federal transport shadow minister Warren Truss is expected to visit Mount Gambier in the next fortnight.

Mr Truss has lobbied heavily against ending the enroute subsidy scheme.

While he is expected to meet with local representatives of the transport industry, it is unlikely Mr Truss will make any public appearances while in the region.