

MEDIA RELEASE

Budget Axes Funding For Frontline Services! Queenslanders Now More At Risk!

5 MAY 2016

The Federal Government's Budget this week axed vital funding which will severely affect frontline services delivered to Queenslanders who need them most.

The Services Union which represents Social and Community Sector Workers across the State said the Turnbull/Morrison Budget shows they are only interested in looking after the top end of town!

Assistant Secretary of The Services Union Jennifer Thomas said, the Budget cuts will mean a loss of Queensland jobs, cuts to over 180 programs and 80 000 people at risk of homelessness including women and children in violent relationships.

"Almost every week, we hear of another woman losing her life because of domestic violence," Ms. Thomas said.

"However, the Federal Budget is woefully inadequate when it comes to supporting women experiencing Domestic and Family Violence (DFFV). While there is a funding increase of \$33 million it is a fraction of what is needed to support vulnerable women. This is a far cry from the \$202 million allocated by the Queensland Government to support and create opportunities for women and young people."

"The lack of funding means that some services will not be able to fund the workforce which assists women and children fleeing domestic and family violence. Our members working in DFFV services are already working at capacity and funding cuts just make matters worse," Ms. Thomas said.

There are funding cuts to mental health services – including specialist youth mental health programs, aged care, community legal centres and Aboriginal legal services.

"There is also no long term security for the Queensland Working Women Centre which supports marginalised women, with funding expiring at the end of this year." Ms. Thomas said.

"All these cuts could mean job losses for hard working Queenslanders who provide frontline services to the most vulnerable in our communities."

The Government will review 90 thousand recipients of the Disability Support Pension over three years to identify 'efficiencies' in government spending.

"The other very intriguing aspect of this Budget is that the Federal Government thinks in order to fund the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), they have to restrict welfare support for people with a disability," Ms. Thomas said.

"What this means is that the Government is taking money away from people with disabilities to fund their own care. This is ludicrous! It's robbing Peter to pay Paul! Perhaps, the Federal Government could look at taxing big corporations to help fund something like the NDIS."

The Budget also delivered of \$11.5 million in funding cuts to homelessness services including women and youth refuges from July next year by failing to renew the National Partnership on Homelessness.

"This means over 1,000 jobs could go across the country, many in Queensland," Ms. Thomas said.

"Our Union is working with our members in all of these services to ensure job security and service delivery, so the vulnerable are not forgotten!"

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