

MEDIA RELEASE

Clive Palmer Sets up the Hope Fund to Assist Queensland's Community Service Sector

27 SEPTEMBER 2012

Clive Palmer has pledged his personal financial support to members of The Services Union who are victims of the Newman Government's razor cuts to community sector funding.

Mr Palmer has offered to contribute a quarter of a million dollars to create The Hope Fund – a fund that will be used to assist affected members who have or will lose their jobs in Queensland's frontline social and community sector, with vocational training and distress counselling.

Secretary of The Services Union Kath Nelson said Mr Palmer's offer of support will provide community sector workers hope for their futures.

"The Hope Fund is extremely welcomed by our Union and we are grateful to Mr Palmer for this initiative," Ms Nelson said.

"It shows that Mr Palmer not only has empathy for the 'invisible' people who work behind the scenes supporting the most vulnerable in our community, he understands these cuts hurt all Queensland communities: rural, regional and urban."

"Premier Newman vowed that frontline services would not be cut in his pre-election promises, but we have seen nothing but the opposite."

"Of the \$259 million cut from Community Services grants over four years, there will be \$65 million this year. This means between 800-1,000 full time equivalent jobs will be lost. The reality is hundreds more will lose their jobs and have hours cut, as the sector has a high proportion of part-time and casual staff," Ms Nelson said.

Since the Newman Government was sworn into office, some of the funding cuts have included and severely affected, organisations such Queensland Healthy Communities, the Queensland Working Women's Service, Deception Bay Community Youth Program, BoysTown, ACCES Services, Blueprint Employment, Career Keys and Sisters Inside. Entire funding programs like the Tenancy Advice and Advocacy Service (TAAS), Skilling Queenslanders For Work, community development funding, and the Youth Support Coordinators Program have been cut. The funding for these programs affects a large community services organisations across Queensland – the TAAS funding cut alone impacts on 23 organisations, some of which will be forced to close down entirely.

W theservicesunion.com.au

P 07 3844 5300
F 07 3846 5046

"Some of these workers assist the one third of our State's renters. We have the largest proportion of renters in Australia. Who will Queensland renters now go to for advice?," Ms Nelson said.

"The cuts in funding have meant thousands in our communities will no longer have access to nor will they have the support of highly skilled workers at these organisations."

"What is worse, that unlike direct public servants we estimate that half of these workers will not have access to redundancy payments as they are excluded under the national Employment Standards (NES) because their employer has less than 15 employees."

"Although the Newman Government has attacked the vital frontline work that is done in the social and community sector, our Union greatly appreciates the assistance provided by Mr Palmer for affected workers," Ms Nelson said.

"In the final analysis families must be cared for first," Mr Palmer said. "We need policies that create growth and instigate new and sustainable jobs."

AUSTRALIAN MUNICIPAL,
ADMINISTRATIVE, CLERICAL
AND SERVICES UNION
QUEENSLAND (SERVICES
AND NORTHERN
ADMINISTRATIVE) BRANCH
ABN 86 351 665 653

QUEENSLAND SERVICES,
INDUSTRIAL UNION OF
EMPLOYEES
ABN 13 540 483 194

TRADING AS
THE SERVICES UNION

SECRETARY:
Kathrine Nelson
ASSISTANT SECRETARY:
Jennifer Thomas

... ENDS

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Belinda Hogan-Collis, Media/Communications Officer on 07 3010 4446 or 0401 710 039.