



MEDIA RELEASE

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AUSTRALIAN PROGRESSIVES URGE GOVERNMENT TO SETTLE REDRESS CLAIMS

The Australian Progressives are urging the Morrison Government and Minister for Families and Social Services, The Hon Anne Ruston, to immediately settle all redress claims submitted since the handing down of the recommendations from the Royal Commission in to Institutional Child Sexual Abuse in 2017, and to claim the funds from institutions who are yet to opt in.

National Communications Director of the Australian Progressives, Pete Dillon, demanded the government take action to expedite the process and end the trauma for survivors and their families. "The government was happy to splash hundreds of millions of dollars around to shore up votes in marginal seats prior to the 2019 federal election, while survivors and victims of child sexual abuse are left in the dark and suffering under a system which is fundamentally flawed, slow and ineffectual. This is causing further trauma, and in some cases, self-harm and suicide."

Mr Dillon is a survivor of 18 months of violent sexual abuse perpetrated by a priest when he was eight. The order which is a part of the Australian Catholic Church, is yet to opt into the system. "Many of us started this process six or seven years ago, to be heard, understood and believed. Successive governments have failed each of us and the families of those who have struggled with drug and/or alcohol abuse as a result of the trauma. With less than 1000 of the more than 7000 claims for redress settled, we are again feeling alone, unheard and not believed. Our leaders have abandoned us – we are being ignored."

The Morrison Government saw fit to squander hundreds of million dollars prior to the 2019 federal election to shore up votes in marginal seats with cash handouts to sporting clubs and promised to spend more than \$150 million on swimming pools. Where is the money for survivors – many of whom live in appalling poverty due to mental health, drug and alcohol issues, related to their abuse?

"The Morrison Government along with Prime Ministers Abbott and Turnbull have had ample opportunity to ensure we are compensated, and they have instead left us to deal with trauma caused to us by institutions over decades. It's time for them to support rather than ignore us, to settle the remaining 6000 claims. Surely, they can place pressure on those organisations yet to commit to redress to reimburse the funds. The Redress system has become an extreme waste of taxpayer funds and another tool for organisations to continue to punish the most vulnerable," Mr Dillon continued.

The maximum cost to the government to settle all claims would be \$900M.

ENDS



About Australian Progressives:

We believe in the advancement of an empathetic society - one in which all citizens of Australia can reach their full potential and find fulfilment in their lives within a thriving democracy. We will be a government with the guts to advance society through laws, services and infrastructure, for the benefit of all people. We believe government and communities should work together to develop creative and passionate individuals who can improve the world around them, embracing education, technology, science, culture and global leadership.

Pete Dillon National Communications Director of the Australian Progressives is available for comment.

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