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MEDIA RELEASE

**ABBOTT GOVERNMENT TWISTING THE FACTS TO ATTACK DISABILITY
SUPPORT PENSIONERS**

The Abbott Government's sustained attack on disability support pensioners is a shameful attempt to pave the way for savage cuts in Tuesday's Budget.

Any cuts to the Disability Support Pension in Tuesday's Budget will be a complete betrayal of people with disability, who were promised before the election that there would be no change to their pension.

Before the election, Tony Abbott made a solemn promise to people on the DSP:

*ABBOTT: No cuts to education, no cuts to health, **no change to pensions**, no change to the GST and no cuts to the ABC or SBS.*

[Tony Abbott – SBS Interview – 6 September 2013]

Yesterday, members of the Abbott Government were again deliberately twisting the facts in an attempt to mislead Australians about the Disability Support Pension.

"...the issue with the Disability Support Pension is that it is growing very rapidly..."

[Alan Tudge – Sky News – 10 May 2014]

Numbers on the Disability Support Pension are not ballooning, despite what the Abbott Government wants people to believe. The Disability Support Pension is not unsustainable.

Labor made a number of responsible reforms to the Disability Support Pension to ensure it remained on a sustainable footing and to support people into work, when possible. Thanks to Labor's reforms:

The number of people on the Disability Support Pension fell by nearly 8,000 between 2011 and 2013.

The grant rate for people coming on to the Disability Support Pension dropped by 22 percentage points – the grant rate actually increased last time the Liberals were in government.

According to [numbers](#) released by the Abbott Government earlier this year, there were 116 more people on the Disability Support Pension in December 2013 than there were in December 2011.

Over the same two year period, figures from the [Australian Bureau of Statistics](#) show that the Australian working age population increased by 431,000. What these numbers show is that the proportion of working age people on the Disability Support Pension has actually decreased (from 5.5 per cent to 5.4 per cent).

In addition, the most recent [Intergenerational Report](#) from the Treasury projects that Australia will spend around 0.1 per cent of GDP more on the Disability Support Pension in 2049-50 than we spent in 2009-10. There is no crisis on our spending on disability support.

The Abbott Government is set on attacking some of the most vulnerable people in our community.

People on the Disability Support Pension have permanent disability that prevents them from working, and have living costs that Tony Abbott and Joe Hockey just don't understand.

At the same time as he cuts support for people with disability, Tony Abbott is stubbornly standing by his rolled-gold Paid Parental Leave Scheme that will give \$50,000 to people on very high incomes to have a baby.

Tony Abbott's priorities are completely twisted.

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