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**E&OE TRANSCRIPT  
INTERVIEW DOORSTOP  
LAUNCESTON  
TUESDAY, 20 MAY 2014**

***SUBJECT/S: TONY ABBOTT'S BROKEN PROMISE TO PENSIONERS, TONY ABBOTT'S CUTS TO PENSIONS, YOUNG JOB SEEKERS, AND FAMILIES***

**JENNY MACKLIN:** Thanks very much everyone for joining us today, I'm very pleased to be here in Launceston with my colleagues Senator Helen Polley and Senator Carol Brown.

All of us have been meeting today with people in Launceston who are very frightened about the changes that are going to affect so many people here Tasmania for the Federal Budget.

Today we've released figures that show with Tony Abbott ripping up the National Pensioner Concession Agreement Tasmania will lose around \$9 million a year. That will mean around 100,000 pensioners here in Tasmania will lose the support they get to pay for things like public transport, their rates, their water and electricity bills.

All because Tony Abbott has just ripped up the National Concessions Agreement, whether the State Government will make up the difference or not, we don't know. At the moment pensioners are being told you will have to pay more for concessions you currently get on your water bills, on your electricity bills because Tony Abbott has taken so much money away from pensioner concessions.

The other big issue that was raised with us by the people we just met with was the extra cost of going to see a doctor. People we met with today have highlighted how hard it is to find a doctor that bulk bills. If you add the out-of-pocket cost to the \$7 co-payment many Tasmanians will find it hard to afford to go to a doctor. So that was the biggest issue that was raised with us today.

**JOURNALIST:** I understand that you're meeting with pensioners later today?

**MACKLIN:** We are we're meeting with pensioners at lunchtime today. Of course they will be very concerned to hear that Tony Abbott has ripped up the Concessions Agreement with the States that means \$9 million out of the pockets of pensioners here in Tasmania. \$9 million that Tony Abbott has taken from the pockets of pensioners. That's just in Tasmania.

It doesn't start in two or three years' time it starts on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July. So it's an immediate cut that Tony Abbott is delivering to pensioners.

In addition, pensioners know Tony Abbott has decided to cut the pension by changing the way pensions are indexed. So instead of pensions going up as fast as they use to they'll go up much more slowly and that will mean a cut to pensioners in the future.

**JOURNALIST:** Labor figures have come out in support of changes to the GST; do you think it's time for a full and frank discussion on that?

**MACKLIN:** I don't think that's the way forward, if Tony Abbott is looking to save money he should look at his gold-platted paid parental leave scheme.

The cost of Tony Abbott's paid parental leave scheme that will see wealthy women get paid \$50,000 to have six months off to have a baby is more than \$20 billion, that's \$20 billion, Tony Abbott can start there.

**JOURNALIST:** What would be the impact of broadening the GST or (inaudible)?

**MACKLIN:** Well we're not looking at that as an option, so I'm not going to get into that. What I'm saying to Tony Abbott is get your priorities right. Go back to the drawing board on your gold-platted paid parental leave scheme and leave pensioners alone.

**JOURNALIST:** (inaudible)

**MACKLIN:** Yes we are we don't think it's fair. Labor introduced Australia's first national paid parental leave scheme. It's a targeted scheme it's affordable we don't think it is right to be paying \$50,000 to wealthy women to have a baby.

**ENDS**

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