



MEDIA RELEASE

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INEQUALITY IN AUSTRALIA WILL CONTINUE TO WIDEN UNDER AN ABBOTT GOVERNMENT

A report released today by the Australian Council of Social Services shows the income and inequality gap in Australia is widening.

The report identified wages as the main source of income and revealed a growing disparity in wage rates and working hours, particularly for those without "in-demand" skills.

Over the 25 years to 2010, wages growth has been very unequal. Wages have grown by 72 per cent for those people in the top 10 per cent, while they have only grown by 14 per cent for those in the bottom 10 per cent.

Unlike the Abbott government, Labor believes in a fair and economically responsible minimum wage, along with training and skill development in the demand areas that will become the jobs of the future.

Instead of taking steps to address Australia's growing inequality, the Abbott Government is continuing its savage attack on low and middle income Australians.

Tony Abbott and Scott Morrison want to slash \$8.5 billion from the pockets of Australian families.

Family payments go to families to help with the costs of raising children – to help ensure every child has a good start to life.

Mr Abbott's cuts are bad for families and bad for children, making it much harder for Australian families to make ends meet.

And of course, those families with the least will lose the most.

Tony Abbott and Scott Morrison also want to push young people into poverty – leaving young jobseekers under 25 with nothing to live on for a month.

This is in addition to Tony Abbott's increase to the cost of schooling – jeopardising future opportunities for our children.

Equity in access to education is one of the cornerstones of Australia's democracy and underpins an ability to overcome the income and inequality gap.

Around 330,000 current pensioners are set to lose including 90,000 pensioners who will be kicked off the pension altogether

Within ten years, more than half of all new retirees, people in their 50s and 60s today (700,000 people) will be worse off.

Pensioners living on as little as \$15,000 super income a year will be worse off because of these changes.

At the same time Tony Abbott and Scott Morrison continue to provide tax breaks to millionaires.

We know families, young people and older Australians are doing it tough.

Labor opposed these cuts to families and young people when they were announced in last year's Budget.

And Labor will continue to oppose them.

Australians do not want to live in a country that abandons older Australians, hardworking families and young people who have fallen on hard times.

Inequality in Australia will continue to widen under an Abbott Government.

Only Labor can be trusted to support a strong future for low and middle income Australian families and young people.

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