

The Labor logo features the word "Labor" in white, bold, sans-serif font on a red rectangular background. To the right of the red bar is a blue square containing the Australian flag's stars.

MEDIA RELEASE | **WE'LL PUT
PEOPLE FIRST**

**THE HON JENNY MACKLIN MP
SHADOW MINISTER FOR FAMILIES AND PAYMENTS
SHADOW MINISTER FOR DISABILITY REFORM
MEMBER FOR JAGAJAGA**

**THE HON ANDREW LEIGH MP
SHADOW ASSISTANT TREASURER
MEMBER FOR FRASER**

**SENATOR CLAIRE MOORE
SHADOW MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES, CARERS AND WOMEN
SENATOR FOR QUEENSLAND**

A STRONG, VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY SECTOR

A Shorten Labor Government will reset the Federal Government's relationship with the community and not-for-profit sector and usher in a new era of meaningful partnership for positive social change.

Labor understands the critical role played by Australia's community and not-for-profit sector in building the capacity of individuals and communities, strengthening community cohesion, addressing inequality and harnessing opportunity.

We know that government alone cannot solve all our social problems. Only by working in partnership with community organisations – and communities themselves – can we bring about lasting change.

But for three years, the Liberals have treated the community and not-for-profit sector with contempt.

First, the Liberals ripped more than \$270 million worth of funding from frontline services.

They stripped peak advocacy organisations of their funding and slashed money from community legal centres and family violence services.

Then they completely botched their community grants process – pitching community organisations against one another and leaving many frontline services without funding certainty.

As a result, some frontline services have had to cut staff or reduce their services. Some have closed entirely.

The Liberals also tried to scrap the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profit Commission (ACNR) – only to be fought off by a relentless campaign by Labor and representatives of the community sector.

It's time to change the way that government works with the community sector.

That is why a Shorten Labor Government will draw a line in the sand and embark on a new agenda of partnership with community and non-for-profit organisations.

Unlike the Liberals, Labor believes that government and the community sector should work together to

develop quality policy, to implement that policy and ensure it delivers real outcomes for vulnerable Australians.

Labor has already established a Federal Labor Community Sector Partnership – a regular forum for debating policy ideas and direction.

If elected, Labor will make the Community Sector Partnership a permanent interface between government and the community sector.

Labor will also:

- Reinvigorate the National Compact with the Third Sector – to outline the terms of engagement and agree a joint agenda for working together.
- Scrap the Liberal's shambolic community grants program. This has been a disaster for community organisations and should not be allowed to continue. While Labor will honour all existing contracts, over time we will move towards a fairer approach to funding community organisations, including longer term contracts.
- Continue to work through the ACNC to streamline reporting mechanisms and cut red tape for community and not-for-profit organisations.

In addition, Labor will work with the community and not-for-profit sectors in the development of Labor's national information policy, to ensure that the power of open data is available to assist the community sector to do its job more effectively.

We will continue to support community organisations through the volunteer grants program. We know that community organisations often rely on these small grants to assist them to attract and keep volunteers. Labor will provide a further \$10 million toward this important program.

Labor also understands that – particularly as the NDIS and Living Longer Living Better Aged Care Reforms roll out around the country - casualisation and insecure work are of great concerns to many employees.

Labor will work with the community and not-for-profit sector to protect the wages and conditions of employees as these reforms roll out around the country.

This is Labor's plan for a strong, vibrant and sustainable community sector.

WEDNESDAY, 8 JUNE 2016