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**NEW ANALYSIS SHOWS WHY THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT CUT THE  
ENERGY SUPPLEMENT**

Research released today by the Social Policy Research Centre at the University of NSW confirms that jobseekers and families on the minimum wage are struggling to make ends meet.

Right now the Liberal Government is trying to axe the Energy Supplement – a direct cut to Newstart Allowance of \$8.80 per fortnight.

Removing the Energy Supplement will only drive people who are already struggling further into poverty.

The report, commissioned by ACOSS, Catholic Social Services and United Voice, shows that people working full time on the minimum wage with partners or children are unable to afford a basic standard of living.

For example, the combined wage and safety net income received by a low-paid couple with two children leaves them \$89 a week below their estimated basic living costs.

Single jobseekers receiving Newstart Allowance fall short of the costs of a basic standard of living by \$96 a week. Taking into account family payments, an unemployed couple with one child falls short of a basic living standard by \$58 a week, and by \$126 a week if they have two children.

An unemployed single parent with one child is short of their costs by \$47 per week.

These results are very concerning.

Labor believes that first and foremost social security should ensure a decent standard of living for all Australians, to alleviate poverty and reduce inequality.

Labor knows that Newstart is too low. At the last election we committed to a comprehensive review of the adequacy of Newstart.

The Turnbull Government is determined to cut Australia's social safety net. They have relentlessly tried to cut to the incomes of the most vulnerable Australians for the last four years.

Labor calls on the Government to drop its unfair cuts and take its plan to axe the Energy Supplement out of the Parliament and out of the Budget.

**WEDNESDAY, 23 AUGUST 2017**