



13 January 2017

Dear Educators, Parents and Supporters,

What a week it has been.

This week began with Senator David Leyonhjelm making incredibly insulting comments about the early education sector and about the value of the work educators do every single day.

We all know his attitude is ridiculous and completely out of step with mainstream views on the importance of early education and care. I believe he is unlikely to change his mind whether he spends a day walking in your shoes, seeing the work that you do, or a month.

Happily, the reaction to his comments has been both deafening and inspiring. Educators across Australia spoke out proudly about the value of their work and the contribution they make to each child, each family and the whole community. Parents and supporters rallied behind educators, with many thousands signing our petition and sharing their outrage.

I began my career working as an educator in a centre in South Australia and I know how challenging and rewarding working in early education is. I also know that the journey for respect, recognition and professional pay is far from over.

Senator Leyonhjelm ignited a wave of anger and frustration. It's now time to turn this anger into action. 2017 is going to be our campaign's biggest year ever. Many of you took actions last year that you had never taken before, actions that as a campaign we had never taken before. 2017 will see more of this. This campaign will grow even bigger and go even further.

There are many of you in various different forums across the internet calling for further actions and more walk offs. We are listening and getting even more excited about what 2017 will bring. We are closer than we have ever been before to taking more radical action. Australia's industrial relations system is tough though and we need to make sure that we are ready.

Membership is critically important to this campaign; without members joining United Voice, pooling their resources and standing together to fight, we won't be able to win professional pay.

Turn your anger into action, join United Voice today and let's show the Senator that early education matters and that early educators are the beating heart of Australia's future.

In Unity

Helen Gibbons – Ex-early years educator, Big Steps Campaign Director and United Voice Assistant National Secretary