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Unfair Federal Budget fails Tasmanian workers

Last night's Federal Budget has failed to deliver for Tasmanians and has exposed the Turnbull Government's real priorities – protecting the big end of town while working people, students and welfare recipients lose out.

“This is a budget that fails Tasmania. Tasmanian workers are telling their unions that they want a job they can count on. They want a job that provides them security, doesn't cut their penalty rates and allows them to balance their work and home life. This budget addresses none of those things,” said Jessica Munday, Unions Tasmania Secretary.

“What they got last night was a Treasurer who was silent on penalty rate cuts. A Treasurer who made some big assumptions about future wage growth despite it currently being at record lows.”

“What good are a few measures around housing affordability when you're in casual employment and you can't even get a home loan?” asked Ms Munday. “And, to top it off, most Tasmanians will be paying more tax.”

Tasmanians should also be concerned about a number of cuts and missed opportunities. Some points to note:

- The Budget delivers a cut in school funding. Instead of the \$100M in Gonski funding that Tasmanian schools desperately need, they will now only get \$16.5M.
- There is limited infrastructure spending and no funding for big projects like the Bridgewater Bridge and the UTAS STEM project that would create jobs;
- It includes more Centrelink job cuts even after the recent robo-debt debacle that saw many Tasmanians experience severe distress and hardship;
- Students will be paying higher university fees while being expected to pay it back earlier with a new HELP threshold of \$42,000 – only a little more than the minimum wage.
- With around a third of Tasmanians receiving Government assistance, this Budget will further entrench disadvantage by drug testing welfare recipients and inflicting harsh penalties for non-compliance.

“This Budget isn't fair. What the Turnbull Government has done is made a set of choices. They've chosen to back big corporations and make workers, students and welfare recipients pay for their tax cuts. It will do nothing to address inequality and raise the living standards of Tasmanians.”

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