

MEDIA ALERT: Northern Suburbs Mayors, People On JobSeeker Come Together To Campaign Against JobSeeker Cuts

JobSeeker Community Forum: Thursday November 5, 1pm, Twelve 25 Community Centre, 17-19 Wiltshire Street, Salisbury

Media Opportunities: People on JobSeeker, Mayors of northern suburbs Councils, spokespeople from Anti-Poverty Network SA and St. Vincent de Paul SA

Mayors of some of Adelaide's largest Councils, people on JobSeeker, and members of the community will come together to discuss how we can prevent the Government's upcoming JobSeeker cuts and campaign to ensure JobSeeker is raised to a livable level.

This urgent gathering, co-hosted by Anti-Poverty Network SA and St Vincent de Paul SA, will feature the Mayors of northern suburbs Councils that have backed the campaign to raise JobSeeker, and whose communities will be hardest-hit by further JobSeeker cuts:

- *Playford Mayor Glenn Docherty
- *Salisbury Mayor Gillian Aldridge OAM
- *Port Adelaide Enfield Mayor Claire Boan
- *Gawler Mayor Karen Redman
- *Prospect Deputy-Mayor Matt Larwood

Research by Deloitte Access Economics has revealed that if JobSeeker returns to the brutally low old rate of \$40 a day, Adelaide's northern suburbs will experience severe impacts to jobs and incomes:

- *Playford Council: 1,350 jobs lost, \$197 million loss of income
- *Salisbury Council: 1,578 jobs lost, \$230 million loss of income
- *Port Adelaide Enfield Council: 1,231 jobs lost, \$180 million loss of income

Anti-Poverty Network SA spokesperson Eileen Darley said: *"The recent and devastating \$300 a fortnight cut has caused huge stress for people who, even with the full supplement, were only just surviving. It has meant people have had to cut back on fresh food, medicines, and are finding it harder to cover their rent and bills.*

To make matters worse, it appears the Government is considering a further cut, right before Christmas, at one of the hardest times of the year for people on low incomes. Any cuts will not only make life harder for those who are already not coping, but will also do further damage to our fragile economic state.

To do this, when we know there are so few job vacancies at the moment, and 1.6 million people on JobSeeker, is cruel and maddening.

We are calling for the \$300 per fortnight COVID supplement for people on JobSeeker to be reinstated. The COVID JobSeeker rate of \$550 a week should be made permanent."

St Vincent de Paul SA Manager of Homelessness Services Tony Roach, said: *"Income inequality in*

Australia is higher than the OECD average, with more than one in eight adults and more than one in six children living in poverty. Even prior to the pandemic, poverty and inequality in Australia were entrenched. Now, the Federal Government has a golden opportunity to improve the lives of millions of Australia who have been forced to live under the poverty line – not just because it makes economic sense, but because it is the right and humane thing to do.”

Salisbury Mayor Gillian Aldridge OAM said: “The wellbeing of our community is a primary concern for City of Salisbury. The emergence of COVID-19 and resulting increased JobSeeker supplements has highlighted what we already knew – that Newstart and Youth Allowance payments are not sufficient to enable people to adequately support themselves. Council has been actively involved in lobbying the Federal Government to raise these payment rates in order to improve standard of living, and to act as a safety net to support people through difficult, transitional periods in their life.”

Gawler Mayor Karen Redman said: “My community, particularly our young people continue to suffer as a result of the inadequacy of the JobSeeker Payment. The pandemic has brought some much needed relief to many who struggle to keep their head above water. I urge the Australian government to raise the payment and provide some dignity and hope for many who rely on this payment whilst seeking that increasingly hard-to-find job that will lift them out of poverty.”

Further Info: Pas Forgione, Anti-Poverty Network SA, on 0402 681 352 or at info@apnsa.org.