

Income Support Recipients Treated as Second Class Citizens



Each week, pensioners, carers and jobseekers call my office requesting assistance with issues related to their income support. I invited Linda Burney, the Shadow Minister for Human Services, to join me in consulting with locals on the issue. It was especially concerning for us to hear that people with legitimate and permanent disabilities are being subject to cruel and humiliating reviews of their Disability Support Pension on a regular basis which can lead to unjust cancellations.

People also told us that they are trying to do the right thing and report their circumstances, but their calls to Centrelink are going unanswered. Unfortunately, the only response that we've seen from the Government is to release damaging and hurtful statistics to the media, reinforcing negative stereotypes about Caboolture's jobseekers. The Government's mismanagement of the terribly under-resourced Department of Human Services (DHS) and its attitude towards income support recipients is unacceptable. **I will continue to work tirelessly to restore efficiency to DHS and ensure that pensioners, carers and jobseekers are treated with dignity and respect.**

"I waited over three and a half months for my Carer Payment to be processed. I contacted Centrelink several times, only to be told that my application could not be escalated unless my local MP intervened. Susan Lamb's office helped me, and my claim was eventually processed. The point is, how many other carers are out there that have just given up on pursuing their claim?"
Freya, Carer, Morayfield



In the period from August 2016 – June 2017, **42 million calls to Centrelink went unanswered.**



Malcolm Turnbull's freeze to the **Family Tax Benefit has started, with a \$1.4 billion cut to families.**



During the period 2013 - 2016, the **average processing time for the Aged Pension doubled from 31 to 57 days.**

Census Statistics Reveal the Degree of Inequality in Longman



The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is gradually releasing statistics from the 2016 Census, highlighting the social and economic inequality that exists for people in our area.

This is a real concern as the gap is set to widen even further. The Government is lumping an additional tax on all working people in Longman by increasing the Medicare Levy to 2.5 percent. It just doesn't make sense when, at the same time, millionaires are being handed a tax cut of \$16,000.

Right across our electorate from Narangba to Bribe, reducing inequality is good for everyone in our community. I am committed to reforming our tax system, making it fairer for everyone. This includes closing existing loopholes that enable high income earners to avoid paying tax via family trusts, releasing more than \$17 billion back into our schools, hospitals and community services. **I also refuse to support any increase to the Medicare Levy to people earning less than \$87,000, who make up around 81.6 percent of our community.**

"Our Church helps families in need at our local school. We're not in a position to do a lot, because we haven't got a lot of money ourselves. The inequality that people are experiencing in our community puts additional pressure on organisations like us to assist; we try to help where we can."
Yvonne, Uniting Church, Caboolture

The median weekly personal income is **\$580.**

20.5% of households had a weekly household income of less than **\$650.**

Median rents are **\$320 per week.**

Source: 2016 Census QuickStats

National Broadband Network still not up to speed



Residents on Ann-Maree Drive in Caboolture weren't expecting their NBN to be connected until 2020. They gathered at one of my Mobile Offices earlier this year to voice their frustration. Fortunately, some of the residents have been advised recently that they will be connected this year – congratulations Ann-Maree Drive!

Aside from the connectivity issues experienced by people and businesses alike, my office has been inundated with reports of slow speeds and frequent drop-outs. It's particularly distressing for some of our elderly residents with Medical Alert Systems which can fail when their NBN drops out. I refuse to stand by while our community's lives and livelihoods are being jeopardised. I need your help so we can keep the Turnbull Government accountable. **Come to one of my upcoming Community Action on NBN events and demand a better telecommunications system in Longman.**

"I would hate to think how much the NBN rollout has cost small business across Australia!"
Jo, Aged Care Manager, Woorim

Labor's Plan to Support Local Defence Families



I recently invited the Shadow Minister for Defence, the Hon Richard Marles MP, to listen to some of our local veterans' stories; the conversations focussed on the challenges they have faced in transitioning back to civilian life. From the discussion, it was clear that there are issues with the rehabilitation process upon discharge, as well as the level of support available to our veteran families who play a critical part in the recovery process.

Richard and I acknowledge these problems and are working to develop a family engagement and support strategy that will enable us to identify where greater support needs to be provided to our ADF personnel, veterans and the people that matter most to them - their wives, husbands, sons and daughters. Thank you to Remembrance House in Burpengary for facilitating this important discussion.

"If you're an ex-serviceman or woman, don't be ashamed to come forward and say 'I have a problem'. 25 years ago, people weren't coming forward, and I think it's still an issue to a lesser extent. For defence families supporting a loved one, it's important to know that you are not alone. There are 100's of families in the same boat as you. Sometimes you just need to put your hand up and say 'I'm not coping'."
John, retired RAAF Sergeant, Narangba

The Employment Minister recently claimed that 413 people have found a job through PaTH. Yet, another Liberal Senator has made claims that 10,000 people have found jobs. It's time for the Government come clean about its failed PaTH program.

Workers in Longman receiving a cut to their penalty rates:

Retail: 7,490
 Food and Accommodation: 3,657
Total: 11,147

Turnbull's War on Jobs, Wages and Conditions



Each year, right up until 2020, penalty rates will be gradually reduced. Under this Government, we're seeing attacks on workers' rights at every angle.

Malcolm Turnbull's PaTH 'internship' program gives jobseekers a measly \$200 on top of their income support payments in exchange for their labour - that's \$4 an hour! To add insult to injury, some participants are not covered in the event of a workplace illness or injury.

I will work with Labor to reverse the cuts to penalty rates and dismantle PaTH. We'll implement real solutions to training and skilling like investing an additional \$637.6 million in TAFE and vocational education, reversing Malcolm Turnbull's Budget cuts in full.

"PaTH is a disgrace. It's just another avenue which forces young people to work for nothing; it's exploiting young kids today who are already finding it hard to get work. It ties these kids up in an activity which prevents them from searching for more meaningful and decent work."
Ian, Retiree, Caboolture