



Greens launch bill to save TAFE

Media Release: 12 November 2013

The Greens today launched in the Waratah Room in NSW Parliament House their bill to stop TAFE becoming the victim of budget cuts, rising fees, job losses and a training market that will privatise skills training.

Greens NSW MP and Education spokesperson John Kaye said: "TAFE has been driven to the brink of collapse.

"Public provision of vocational education and training is already facing budget cuts of \$800 million, soaring fees, cancelled course and hundreds of TAFE educators sacked.

"In early 2015 the new Smart and Skilled market will force TAFE to compete for students and funding with low quality, low cost private providers.

"Under a deal with the previous Federal Labor government, NSW is about to implement a skills training market that will inevitably result in TAFE either disappearing or being forced to cut its standards to meet the private sector's lower costs.

"Disadvantaged students, those with special needs, people from non-English speaking backgrounds, the long-term unemployed and women who have been out of the workforce will be the hardest hit.

"Outreach and equity programs will become add-ons that are unlikely to survive.

"Our bill is designed to put a hold on TAFE budget cuts, job losses, fee rises and the Smart and Skilled market. We want to give the O'Farrell government time to think again.

"Without a strong public provider of vocational education and training, NSW will face rising youth unemployment, increasing levels of inequality and disadvantage and an economy that is unable to grow.

"The O'Farrell government must drop the ideology of training markets and ensure a strong future for public TAFE.

"Cuts to TAFE are not smart but irresponsible because courses will cost more and many people will not be able to afford to gain vocational skills.

"Privatising our public education does not make sense. We need TAFE now more than ever," Dr Kaye said.

For more information: John Kaye 0407 195 455

Background

State and federal governments, both Labor and Coalition, have driven TAFE to the brink of collapse, despite the massive economic and social benefits of publicly provided vocational education and training.

The Greens TAFE Changes Moratorium (Secure Future for Public Provision of Vocational Education and Training) Bill 2013 will be introduced into the NSW parliament in the next fortnight and aims to:

. restore TAFE funding by reversing massive budget cuts, . stop rising fees and job losses, and . freeze the O'Farrell government's aggressive Smart and Skilled market that would create a race to the bottom with low cost, low quality private providers.

The bill is expected to be introduced into parliament in November.

Copies of the bill and other campaign materials are available on request.