

EMBARGOED – 12.01am Friday, 6 February 2015

Abbott government on notice – union campaigns kick off

A new survey of more than 43,000 people shows working Australians feel anxious about their living standards and are deeply dissatisfied with the Abbott government's policies and the direction it is taking Australia.

The ACTU surveyed 43,188 union and non-union members across all industries, in all states and territories, between November 2014 and January 2015.

ACTU President Ged Kearney said the findings are being used to help determine the issues unions will be campaigning on from now until the next election.

"We have been out talking to our members and the wider community about what their concerns are both at work and more broadly ever since Tony Abbott handed down his disastrous budget," Ms Kearney said.

"They've told us living standards, wages and rights at work are the biggest concerns and they want us campaigning on these issues."

Ms Kearney said the union movement will be targeting key marginal seats around the country on the issues that matter most to our members.

"The union movement has become a sophisticated campaign movement since the success of the Your Rights At Work campaign in 2007, which was clearly demonstrated in the recent Victorian and Queensland elections.

"We will provide the training, people power and materials to enable our two million members and supporters to campaign in their communities on the issues that matter to them – both online and on the streets.

"The union movement's strength has always come from people standing together and standing up for what is right – that is at the heart of all our campaigning."

Ms Kearney said there will be a National Day of Action to get campaigning underway on Wednesday 4 March.

OF THE 43,144 PEOPLE SURVEYED:

- 74% said Australia is moving in the wrong direction
- 76% disagree that the budget must be balanced regardless of consequences
- 94% are worried the Federal Government wants to reduce rights at work
- 83% are worried the GST will be increased
- 85% are worried penalty rates will be cut
- 92% are worried the minimum wage will be cut
- 95% are worried about unemployment and 90% are worried about job security
- 87% are worried about GP co-payments and threats to Medicare
- 91% are worried higher education fees will be increased
- 82% said childcare has become less affordable in the past year
- 93% want superannuation increased
- 94% are worried about privatisation

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