ACTU
australian council of trade unions
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Statement by ACTU Secretary Sally McManus on the budget

The Turnbull Government has chosen to do the bidding of big business, offshore investors and the already wealthy, and neglect the needs of working people.

This evening's budget relies on failed trickle-down economics to trick Australians into giving a failed Government another term in power.

The Government's $80 billion tax handout for businesses - $17 billion of which will go to the big banks – shows that the Turnbull Government is bought and paid for by the business lobby.

Buried in the budget papers is a plan to have people on $41,000 a year in the same tax bracket as people earning $200,000 from 2024.

It makes 1280 people jobless who work for the DHS – adding to the pain of the 18,000 people the Turnbull Government has sacked since coming to power.

They have retained an arbitrary cap on the number of people working for the public sector which means that fewer people have secure jobs and the country depends on consultants, multi-national corporations and labour hire employees to keep functioning.

This budget fails to properly finance a needs-based funding program for our schools, or the NDIS, claiming these vital programs and services will be funded by only moderate rises is portfolio budgets. It cuts $87.3 million from the ABC, depriving Australians of reliable reporting on the affairs of their government.

Meanwhile the Government taking from those who can least afford it, saying chasing people for fake Centrelink debt is going to raise $300 million. They've cut $141 million from the aid budget and are pinpointing a discriminatory program of cuts at programs for migrants and refugees.

In a transparent pitch for re-election the government has airbrushed wages growth figures over the forward year to fabricate a return to surplus, listing figures of up to 3.5 percent, while opposing efforts of working people to organise and negotiate fair pay rises.

People on ordinary wages below $90,000 get an absolute maximum of $10 per week – only one fifth of the rise to the minimum wage that the ACTU is fighting for.

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