

media release



Thursday 21 February 2019

Sally McManus meets local workers in Gladstone in campaign for pay rises and job security

The Australian union movement is campaigning for pay rises and better job security after working people have endured five years of no wage growth under the banner of their Change the Rules campaign.

As the Federal election draws closer ACTU Secretary Sally McManus will be touring regional Queensland and meeting with local union members in large town hall style meetings to discuss plans to win better workers rights to deliver fair pay rises and more secure jobs.

To Change the Rules, we need to change the Government.

Flynn is one of the most marginal seats in the country and will help decide who forms the next Government and local workers have been campaigning since last year for better workers' rights.

Workers and their families in Flynn will come along to hear ACTU Secretary Sally McManus and Queensland Council of Unions General Secretary Ros McLennan talk about changing the Government.

Wage growth is at near record lows, with four out of five working people not getting pay rises that keep up with the cost of living.

The current Australian minimum wage is not a living wage, and it no longer keeps people out of poverty.

Forty percent of working people are in insecure work – either in casual work, dependent on contracting, in labour hire, getting too few hours, or in the gig economy.

Workers need the tools and power to win fair pay rises. This includes making our bargaining system fair, increasing the minimum wage to a living wage, ensuring award minimums improve over time, penalty rates are restored, wage theft ended, and secure and equal pay for women.

Sally McManus, Ros McLennan and local Change the Rules activists will be available for media comment at the kick-off event in Gladstone from 5:45pm.

Kick-off event details:

What: Election year kick-off event in Flynn with ACTU Secretary Sally McManus and QCU General Secretary Ros McLennan

Where: Vallis Lecture Theatre, CQ University, Gladstone Marina Campus, 613 Bryan Jordan Drive, Gladstone, Qld.

When: Thursday 21 February, 5:45pm

Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Sally McManus

"People in Gladstone and central Queensland need a pay rise.

"Their pay hasn't gone up in at least five years and they are struggling to meet the cost of living - there's no excuse for this when at the big end of town profits are on the rise.

"They need good, secure jobs but the Morrison Government and big business are standing in the way of this.

"People in Flynn are ready to take action to change the government and win fair pay rises and more secure jobs.

"Locals have been out in their community spreading this message. Wherever I go in Australia, I hear the same story – we are ready for change and here in Flynn people are willing to take action to make change.

"They know big business has too much power, and they know that when working people join together we are mighty and unbreakable.

"Anyone who wants to live in a better, fairer country, who wants more secure jobs and fairer pay rises should attend these events and join the movement for change."

Quotes attributable to QCU General Secretary Ros McLennan

"There's a hundred good reasons why we need to change the rules for workers in Flynn, and these reasons will be part of a social media campaign from Queensland Unions starting today.

"These workers need jobs they can count on and pay rises that keep up with the cost of living.

"Bosses have too much power to shift risk onto workers through labour hire, sham contracting and casual work arrangements that fail to provide the security that local families need. This "catch me if you can" mentality hurts people in Flynn.

"One major reason is that local Coalition MP Ken O'Dowd voted eight times to cut penalty rates for workers in this area, at the same time as wanting to cut taxes for the big banks.

"Workers at NRG had to fight tooth and nail for a decent wage and working conditions, battling against a multinational using the current rules to terminate agreements and increase casual jobs. We need to change these broken rules for workers in Flynn."

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