

Monday 1 April 2019

7 in 10 Australians want action on wages in Budget

More than 70% of Australians want action on low wage growth in the federal budget, to be handed down tomorrow night, according to new polling conducted for the ACTU.

The polling show that 80% of working Australians haven't received a pay rise which has kept pace with the rising cost of living in the last 12 months, and more than 75% say that wage growth will be important to how they vote.

More than half of working people had not had a pay rise at all in the last 12 months, while a further 28.6% had received an increase so small it did not cover the expanding cost of essential items.

Three in four voters said that low wage growth was either the top issue or an important issue when they considered how they would vote in the federal election

Wages have been stalled in real terms for more than six years, with real median wage growth close to zero.

The Morrison Government has issued 21 wage growth forecasts in budgets and MYEFO statements, all have predicted wage growth much higher than the record-low wage growth people have experienced over the last six years.

The Morrison Government has capped wage increases for its own employees at 2%, which is below inflation. At the same time, wages for low paid workers have fallen, forcing them toward poverty and reducing quality of life for the entire Australian workforce.

Meanwhile, profits are increasing and the number of Australian billionaires continues to grow.

The Morrison Government has refused to reverse its cuts to penalty rates and has refused to support increases to the minimum wage, award wages and NewStart.

More than six in ten people polled approved of the ALPs proposal to increase the minimum wage to a living wage.

Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O'Neil:

"Australian workers need a pay rise. The wage growth crisis has affected almost every household in Australia, it's harder to pay the bills or put fuel in the car.

"The Wage growth crisis has been created by the failed economic policies of the Morrison Government. They have nothing to offer Australian workers.

"Working people have had enough of the broken promises of the Morrison Government. Being told the Morrison Government's corporate tax cuts will trickle down if they just wait a little longer won't help working families make ends meet.

"The policies of the Morrison Government have left 40% of people in insecure work, 1 million people underemployed and created 1 million second jobs. This Government has been a disaster for working people.

“We need to change the rules so that working people have the power to win real pay rises. In order to do that we need to change the government. This polling shows that working people are ready to make that choice.”

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