

Tuesday, 14 April 2015

Unions target key Western Australian seats in election campaign

Unions will target key marginal seats in Western Australia in the lead up to the next election as part of a national campaign to defeat the Abbott Government.

ACTU Secretary Dave Oliver is in Perth on Tuesday 14 April to finalise the campaign with UnionsWA Secretary Meredith Hammat.

The launch of the WA campaign comes as support for the federal Coalition and the Prime Minister's approval rating in Western Australia have plummeted, according to Newspoll results for the first three months of 2015.

Nationally, the ACTU will utilise more than 20 new staff as marginal seat coordinators to run campaign activities in 32 nominated seats around Australia.

This includes staff in Perth to coordinate campaign activities in Western Australian seats, depending on the outcome of the current redistribution of seats.

Staff and resources for the campaign will be rolled out nationally over the next few months.

The following can be attributed to ACTU Secretary Dave Oliver:

"This is not just about an election strategy - it's about unions having campaigning capacity irrespective of who is in government at a state and federal level.

"It's about having the ability to campaign on specific issues through a network of activists in marginal seats - whether it's protecting penalty rates or tightening rules on 457 visas to protect local jobs.

"We have excellent coordination between the ACTU and all state Trades and Labour Councils and we will be well prepared if an early election is called.

"We made our voices heard in the Victorian and Queensland elections with one-term Coalition Governments and we can do it again with the Liberal Federal Government."

The following can be attributed to Unions WA Secretary Meredith Hammat:

"In the past WA voters have backed the federal Liberal and National party coalition to a greater extent than anywhere else in Australia and, reflecting WA's rising population, an additional federal seat will be created here at the next election.

"However it is increasingly obviously that the Abbott and Barnett Governments are willing to say one thing before an election and do something else after.

"Unions have won important reforms for our workplaces, including superannuation and decent health and safety standards. Such reforms cannot be protected or built upon without having an influence at the ballot box.

"There are over 150,000 union members in WA and this campaign is about engaging them so they can have a say in protecting their living standards.

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