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Workers feel crack of the whip as Abbott Government demands they work longer

The Abbott Government's assault on working Australians continues today with news of radical cuts and changes to the Age Pension that will particularly affect anyone born after 1965.

Before becoming Prime Minister Tony Abbott made a commitment that there would be no change to pensions, well like many other things, he has changed his tune, ACTU President Ged Kearney said.

"Lifting the retirement age changing indexation requirements and making it harder to access the age pension ignores the reality that while life expectancy may have risen, the ability of Australians to work in physically demanding jobs or maintain secure employment hasn't risen with it," Ms Kearney said.

"If the Government wants to reduce budget pressures as the population ages, it should strengthen the superannuation system rather than raise the pension age.

"A strong superannuation system lets ordinary workers retire with security and quality of life and takes pressure off the pension system.

"The Government should reduce the superannuation tax concessions that disproportionately benefits high income earners and move as quickly as possible to compulsory 12 per cent superannuation contributions to ensure that ordinary workers can afford a decent standard of living in retirement."

Ms Kearney said it was well known that many older workers struggle to get full-time secure work and making them wait until 70 to get their pension and superannuation could leave them in limbo for years.

"Older Australians looking for work are finding it harder and harder and make do by working in multiple insecure, low paid jobs," Ms Kearney said.

"The Abbott Government is doing absolutely nothing to create new job opportunities, despite asking people to work longer.

"The reality is that working until 70 years of age is simply not possible in physically demanding roles. How can construction workers be expected to haul concrete around a work site or a childcare worker keep up with a room full of kids until they're 70?"

"We want to see older workers supported to engage and contribute meaningfully with the community and workforce for as long as they chose but a more considered approach by Government is needed here.

"Australian workers are sick of bearing the brunt of every policy decision the Abbott Government makes.

"The decisions of this Government are hurting workers and slashing their standard of living."

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