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Australians dangerously uninformed on reality of PaTH Scheme

Polling conducted by ReachTEL shows that 62.6% of voters in key marginal seats are less supportive of the government's plan when they learn crucial details about the extremely low pay and lack of conditions that would be faced by workers in the scheme.

Support for the policy in Swan, Banks and Leichardt plummeted once respondents were told that workers would be paid as little as \$4 per hour and would not be guaranteed a job at the end of their 12 week placement.

Unions are concerned PaTH poses a serious risk to young people and inexperienced workers, and could also undermine Australia's entire wage system with interns earning only \$4 an hour – potentially dragging down pay and conditions for all workers.

Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Dave Oliver:

"The Turnbull Government is relying on obfuscation and misdirection, and hoping that the Australian people don't realise the damage this government really wants to inflict on workers until it's too late"

"PaTH would be a disaster, not only for the young people it would exploit directly, but for anyone in a low-paid job who would experience crushing downward pressure on their wages as the bottom is torn out of the employment market."

"People are understandably receptive to any plan to get young people into jobs, but once the draconian details of this attack on all workers become clear, any support the coalition has for this scheme evaporates."

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Media Contact: Gregg Vines 0447 418 726

Key facts:

- Newstart allowance for a single person with no children is currently \$527.60 per fortnight.
- If the recipient works a PaTH internship for 25 hours a week, they only receive an extra \$200 per fortnight (\$4 an hour worked), meaning they receive \$363.80 per week in total.
- The minimum wage is currently \$17.29 per hour, saving business a total of \$432.25 for 25 hours work per week per employee.
- PaTH participants would receive \$68.45 per week below the minimum wage as well as missing out on other important conditions like sick leave, superannuation and penalty rates.
- ABS figures released in March put current job vacancies nationally at around 172,900 while also reporting that 737,300 people are looking for work.