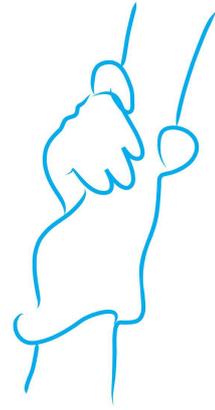


ANTI-POVERTY NETWORK SOUTH AUSTRALIA



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City Of Adelaide Is 10th Council To Support Raising Newstart

Will the LGA follow suit and vote 'Yes' this Thursday?

Anti-Poverty Network SA and SACOSS (SA Council of Social Service) congratulate the City of Adelaide which last night voted to support an increase to Newstart Allowance, the Centrelink payment for job-seekers.

Over the past three months, 10 SA Councils representing 580,000 South Australians have added their voices to the chorus of business, union, and welfare groups calling for Newstart to be raised.

Adelaide has joined the following 9 Councils that have advocated for a raise to Newstart: Clare and Gilbert Valley, Copper Coast, Kangaroo Island, Mount Gambier, Onkaparinga, Playford, Port Adelaide Enfield, Salisbury, and Streaky Bay.

Newstart, at \$269 per week, is \$160 per week below the poverty-line. It is less than 41 percent of the minimum wage, less than 18 percent of the average wage, and has not been raised in real terms for 23 years.

Ross Womersley, CEO of SACOSS, says, "While only the federal government can raise Newstart, local governments can and should speak up for their residents who are out of work and living in poverty".

"Local governments regularly take public stands on issues outside their jurisdiction but which affect their community, and which their community cares about, including marriage equality, coal-seam gas mining, renewable energy, cashless welfare, and many other policies. There is no reason why they cannot take a stand on the need for financial relief for struggling job-seekers," he says.

According to Anti-Poverty Network SA State Coordinator Pas Forgione, "Raising Newstart is a no-brainer: for the unemployed it would mean they can more effectively search for work, and have the capacity to eat well, to look after their physical and mental health, to stay connected to their community and social supports, and to cope with emergency expenses."

"Councils are also realising that increasing Newstart would benefit local economies, by increasing the spending power of those on low incomes, whose extra funds would circulate through local businesses. It would also reduce the strain on Council community services assisting the growing number of people experiencing hardship," he said.

On Thursday, the Local Government Association of SA – the peak body representing the state's 68

Councils – will vote on whether to advocate for an increase to Newstart.

For further information/comment, contact:

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