31 July 2014

LABOR LAUNCHES DAY OF ACTION TO SAVE HOMELESSNESS SERVICES FROM BAIRD’S CUTS

Labor MPs and candidates will be asking members of local communities to sign a petition as part of a day of action against the Baird Liberal Government’s changes to funding for specialist women’s refuges – which will see many forced to close across the state.

The Liberals Going Home, Staying Home reforms will see funding for over 80 specialist homelessness service providers across NSW cut – depriving women and children who are victims of domestic violence and sexual assault of a safe haven from these horrendous acts.

“Specialist homelessness services have been supporting women and children feeling abuse for over four decades – but the Liberals’ senseless reforms, made without a pilot program or consultation, are forcing many of these refuges to shut their doors,” Shadow Minister for Family and Community Services Linda Burney said.

“Labor MPs and candidates will be encouraging members of our local communities to sign the petition and help us bring these cruel cuts to homelessness services to the floor of the Parliament to be debated.

“The Liberals must acknowledge that shutting down these women’s refuges will cut off a vital escape route for women and children who are victims of sexual assault or domestic violence.”

Today, Labor MPs and candidates will be calling on locals to oppose these cuts in Granville and Western Sydney, Newcastle, the Macarthur region, the Central Coast and several locations across inner Sydney.

“These cuts to homelessness services will hurt some of the most vulnerable in the community and undermine decades of support provided to women escaping hostile relationships and homes.

“The Liberals’ ‘one size fits all’ approach to homelessness services simply ignores the particular needs of women seeking refuge at specialist shelters – needs that have been supported until now.”

Shadow Minister for Women Sophie Cotsis said: “The Liberals’ decision to force over 80 homelessness service providers to close their doors is occurring at the same time that the latest crime statistics show an increase in domestic violence.

“This Liberal Government is abandoning vulnerable women at a time when they need the unique services these refuges provide.

“Mike Baird says he wants to help the most vulnerable in our communities, but the reality is just the opposite - his government is forcing the closure of specialist homelessness services that have been helping the most vulnerable for decades.”

MEDIA CONTACT: LINDA BURNEY – 0419 992 874