

TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF VICTORIA

The Petition of certain citizens of the State of Victoria draws to the attention of the Legislative Council the current and serious workforce crisis in the 'not for profit' community sector.

The community sector offers support to those most vulnerable in our community and provides services that are central in addressing disadvantage. The sector is an essential part of our community 'safety net', working to reduce the worst effects of poverty, social exclusion, violence and inequality. To ensure that our community is able to access adequate and appropriate services, the community sector **must** be able to recruit and retain a skilled, dedicated and stable workforce. The sector is increasingly unable to do this, as the wages and conditions of these workers fall further and further behind other sectors. For example, full time qualified community workers earn on average \$15000.00 less than the average wage in Australia.

Your Petitioners therefore request that the Victorian Government immediately invest in the conditions of workers in this vital sector specifically so as to provide:-

- 1. Better wages** as an immediate way to stem the flood of workers leaving for other sectors where they are paid significantly more for doing the same or similar work.
- 2. Portability of Long Service Leave** across the sector to overcome the barriers workers face in achieving the required length of service with a single employer such as limited duration funding and lack of clear career paths.
- 3. Paid Parental Leave** across the sector to address the ongoing exodus of recent graduates who have identified the lack of paid maternity and co-parent leave as a significant factor in their decision to leave.
- 4. Safe workplaces** through fully funded best practice occupational health and safety standards so as to remedy the current major 'burn out' factors.

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