Major Church Providers

Open Letter to all Federal Candidates

Australia's major Church providers* have come together ahead of the upcoming election to call on all parties and candidates to commit to policies that will make a real difference in the lives of the most vulnerable. Our hope is that voters, candidates and parties will transform this vision into a better Australia.

Our shared values

We write to you today to urge you to commit to addressing the hardships and inequalities experienced by the people you seek to serve.

We are Australia's major Church providers. We provide social services across every part of our great nation and, through our churches, have a presence in every single electorate in Australia. We walk with the most vulnerable, alleviating suffering and empowering people to thrive.

We do this because we believe that every human being is equal. Our Christian faith teaches us that every one of us is made in the image of God. We believe that every one of us is worthy and deserving of love and dignity.

The same faith that compels us to provide care and support to whoever needs it, compels us to advocate for something better – for systemic and structural change that addresses the underlying causes of the hardships we see every day.

We don't just see hardship in the work we do; we see the resilience, the courage and the generosity of Australians. We have faith and confidence that every Australian can thrive if they are given support. We know things can be better than they are now.

If you are elected to be part of the 47th parliament of Australia, you will have the power to affect these changes. You can be a voice for the voiceless. You can reaffirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

We ask you to commit now to being a Member of Parliament who works to address poverty and disadvantage.

Our Election 2022 priorities

Australia's major Church providers join together in calling on the next Federal Government to do more for Australia's First Peoples, those living in poverty, people with disabilities and victim-survivors of domestic or family violence. You have the opportunity to put in place the right structures for a better future for all.

Through this election period the major Church providers encourage all candidates and parties to develop platforms ensuring that:

- **A Voice for First Nations Peoples is constitutionally enshrined.** Federal legislation is insufficiently informed by First Nations people with devastating impact. First Nations people should have a direct say on any national laws, policies and programs affecting them.

- **JobSeeker rises above the poverty line.** $45 a day is not enough to live on. Tens of thousands of Australians are forced into terrible choices each fortnight - Choices between grocery, power, and medical bills. JobSeeker needs to cover the basics of life.

- **A safe place to live is not a luxury.** Too many Australians are suffering due to homelessness and substandard housing. More needs to be done to support these people into secure and stable accommodation.

- **The NDIS delivers on its objectives.** The NDIS should act as national system with enough funding to provide tailored, individual support. The Scheme must ensure that participants have a better range of choices and more control in how they live their lives.

- **Australians are safeguarded from domestic and family violence.** All adults and children should be able to live free from fear and violence, and thrive and reach their full potential. We seek a future where women and children and LGBTIQA+ people of all genders are safe.

Kasy Chambers
Executive Director
Anglicare Australia

Monique Earsman
Executive Director
Catholic Social Services Australia

Stuart Glover
Secretary for Mission
The Salvation Army

Claerwen Little
National Director
UnitingCare Australia

***Who we are**

We are major contributors to the well-being of millions of people, supporting one in five Australians every year.

Our networks bring vital personal care and support services to every community in Australia, including early childhood, aged care, disability, homelessness, domestic or family violence, mental health, and food rescue services.

We are driven by our shared Christian values to walk with the most vulnerable in our society and we are committed to working toward a world where all people thrive.

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