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## Fight back against Abbott's anti-worker laws starts in Launceston

The fight back against Tony Abbott's anti-worker agenda ramped up in Launceston today with Australian Unions launching local radio ads calling on cross bench Senators, including Tasmanian Senator Jacqui Lambie, to stand with Australian workers and reject the Abbott Government's attack on rights at work.

Speaking at Launceston General Hospital, ACTU President Ged Kearney said workers in Launceston can't afford Tony Abbott's plan to cut their wages and conditions.

"The Abbott Government will deliver what business and employers want, and swing the pendulum back to them," Ms Kearney said.

"This means more insecurity at work and less rights at work.

"Australian Unions are campaigning against Tony Abbott's push to introduce new laws to swing back power in workplaces to employers, and take away basic rights from ordinary workers.

"If three out of the eight Senate cross-benchers vote no - Tony Abbott's attacks on workers will be defeated."

Tony Abbott wants to:

- Strip protections for workers on individual contracts to cut wages and penalty rates
- Allow you to be paid with something other than money
- Make it easier for a bad boss to rip you off by having you sign away your right to compensation.
- Take away your right to strike by allowing bad bosses to veto industrial action
- Gives mining and construction employers a special deal to write their own Enterprise Agreements.
- Make it harder for you to access and be supported by your union at work.

"The Government is starting with the Fair Work Amendment Bill in the Senate before it launches a Productivity Commission review of workplace laws with terms of reference that may as well have been written by big business," Ms Kearney said.

"Tony Abbott and local Tasmanian Senator, Eric Abetz can repeat their mantra of workplace reform being 'evolution not revolution' - but no one should be fooled. This is the first step of the Coalition's agenda to strip away worker's rights and wages.

"Whatever the Government calls it and however they plan to do it, the end result is still the same - workers will be worse off under the Government's anti-worker agenda.

"The Fair Work Amendment Bill due before the Senate will strip away current protections around individual contracts and make it easier for employers to force workers to give up their penalty rates."

ANMF Tasmanian Secretary Neroli Ellis who joined Ms Kearney said that the attack on workers is not confined to the private sector.

"The Tasmanian Government is also attacking the wages and conditions of the state public servants. The Crown Employees (Salaries) Bill 2014 is about reducing conditions and removing the power of the independent umpire through regulations, which do not enable appropriate scrutiny. This will change the fairness of our industrial relations system in Tasmania," she said.

**Media contact: Carla De Campo, 0410 579 575 or Kara Douglas, 0418 793 885**