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Young people deserve real Working Futures not a PaTH to nowhere

The Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) welcomes today's announcement of Labor's Working Futures job program after campaigning strongly for quality training and work pathways for young Australians.

In many regional areas youth unemployment is in the double digits, yet Malcolm Turnbull's only "innovation" is to push ahead with his exploitative plan to pay interns \$4 an hour under the PaTH program.

ACTU President Ged Kearney said Labor's plan to develop structured learning programs and work placements for employed young people would see participants receiving fair pay for their work, and prepare them with the skills they need to be job-ready.

The ACTU has repeatedly called for the Turnbull Government to abandon the PaTH scheme, which does not have public support, will not deliver any qualification and will not create jobs.

Labor's Working Futures program provides a six-week readiness course focused on essential employment skills, then a six-month work placement with an employer paid at an award-equivalent training wage.

Quotes attributable to ACTU President Ged Kearney:

"Young people want opportunities, they want access to training and they want to build careers. They deserve a living wage.

"I have met parents all over the country over the past month who are horrified that the Turnbull Government wants to farm out their kids to big companies at \$4 an hour. What the PaTH scheme tells us is that the Turnbull Government cannot be trusted on jobs.

"Youth unemployment is now triple the nationwide figure in regions like the Hunter in NSW, big parts of North Queensland like Townsville, south-west Victoria and large parts of Tasmania and South Australia.

"Compare Turnbull's PaTH program with Labor's commitment today to support 20,000 young workers through a structured, comprehensive training program that will deliver real options and ongoing employment.

"Access to training, support and real workplace involvement is what makes a difference for unemployed young people, not being under paid and given no real future opportunity.

"This is too important to get wrong. The Turnbull Government has slashed \$1 billion out of the skills and training sector and has proposed a PaTH to nowhere that won't deliver real jobs.

"Young people are facing a jobs crisis because the Turnbull Government chose to put corporate employer interests ahead of young workers entering the workforce."

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