



MEDIA RELEASE

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Baird Government ignores the needs of 57,000 injured workers yet again

Unions NSW is calling on the NSW Liberal Government to reverse its unfair changes to the workers' compensation scheme and allocate the full \$2.6 billion surplus back into supporting injured workers.

The calls come after the Baird Government's announcement that they would review the financial position of the scheme if re-elected on March 28 and introduce some reprieve for injured workers of retirement age.

"The Baird Liberal Government is tinkering around the edges while the majority of workers are being thrown on the scrap heap," Unions NSW Secretary Mark Lennon said.

"More than 5000 injured workers have been cut off from weekly payments and 20,000 have lost coverage for medical treatment since the Baird Government's savage cuts in 2012. This announcement is nothing but lip service.

"With a multi-million dollar surplus their promises to give lifetime medical benefits to people who have reached retirement age would amount to assisting around 1% of people injured at work.

"While this is a welcome reprieve for a minority it does not nearly go far enough. Already we have had three upper house inquiries and three independent reports into the scheme and all recommend major overhaul.

Finance and Services Minister Dominic Perrottet said about \$500 million of the \$2.6 billion surplus was expected to be available to allocate to workers and employers.

"Given employers have already received premiums cuts of up to 17.5% we call on the Baird Liberal Government to allocate the full \$2.6 billion surplus back to injured workers. Let the scheme do what it was set up to do in the first place, provide much needed assistance to injured workers in their time of need."

Unions NSW supports the recommendations of a Parliamentary Review including: Lowering the threshold for the seriously injured; Restoring medical benefits for work-related injury and illness; Providing legal support for work capacity reviews and the reintroduction of journey claims.

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