

MEDIA RELEASE: ELECTION FORUM – Hear Unemployed Speak Directly To The Pollies (But No Show From The Liberals)

When: Saturday June 18th, 3pm

Where: Uniting Communities Smithfield, 2/2B Morialta Drive (off Anderson Walk)

Special Guest: Duncan Storrar from ABC's *Q&A*

Info: Anti-Poverty Network SA spokesperson Pas Forgione at antipovertynetwork.sa@gmail.com or on 0411 587 663.

Anti-Poverty Network SA, an alliance of low-income people on welfare payments, is hosting an election forum for unemployed people and others to speak directly to politicians about the problems they face, and what they want from the election and beyond.

Candidates have been invited to listen and respond, but the focus will be on those out of work speaking for themselves. Candidates attending will include:

Nick Champion, Australian Labor Party MP for Wakefield

Bob Day, Family First Senator for South Australia

Robert Simms, Australian Greens Senator for South Australia

Skye Kakoschke-Moore, Nick Xenophon Team Senate candidate for South Australia

Artie (Jasmine) Priddey, Australian Progressives Senate candidate for South South Australia

“It is tough being unemployed. There are not enough jobs to go around: the data says in SA, there are only 9,800 job vacancies, but 89,6000 job-seekers – including the unemployed and the underemployed – desperately competing for them. This is unacceptable”, Anti-Poverty Network SA spokesperson Pas Forgione said.

“To make matters worse, unemployed people have to survive on Newstart, which at only \$260 per week, is not enough to live on. The payment has not been properly raised in over 20 years. It not only causes financial stress, it makes it harder for people to look for work.”

“More than ever, it is crucial that those experiencing unemployment are listened to by politicians, and are given a fair go, something that happens nowhere near enough”, Forgione said.

Unemployed person Kat Lee said, “as an unemployed person aged over 55, I have found it extremely difficult to find a job. Employers want recent work history, and the longer you are out of work, the harder it becomes to get work. Newstart makes it even harder, there is not enough to pay rent and bills, let alone buy new clothes or get a hair cut, or see a dentist or doctor. Being older means barriers as it is, let alone trying to survive way below the poverty-line.”