

1 May 2025

Media Release and Alert: Unions to protest Liberal candidate's comments that older workers are 'happy' to work for \$10 an hour

On May Day – the International Workers Day where workers across the globe commemorate the struggle and celebrate the achievements of unions in improving wages and conditions for working people - Tasmanian union members will hold a protest in Devonport following comments by Braddon's Liberal candidate that it's okay for workers to be paid less than half the minimum wage.

Liberal candidate, Mal Hingston told a forum hosted by a local business group that the Liberals were going to “rewind a lot of the stuff that Albanese has done, a lot of the industrial relations changes, and put things back to the way they were.”

Mr Hingston went even further stating Federal Government reforms – which means workers who pick fruit must be paid at least the minimum wage – were stopping older workers from coming to Tasmania to pick fruit stating they used to “come down here to Tassie, and just plod along, and they were happy with \$10 bucks an hour, or whatever it was.”

“No one is happy earning ten bucks an hour. We have a minimum wage in this country so that workers can make a liveable wage and don't get exploited. It sounds like Mal Hingston would be happy to take workers' wages back to the dark ages,” said Unions Tasmania Secretary, Jessica Munday.

Unions have been warning of the risk of a Dutton Liberal Government that would attack their wages and conditions as well as sack 41,000 public sector workers across the country.

“We want to know – what changes does Mal Hingston want to ‘rewind’? Is it the right to disconnect? Is it the same job, same pay reforms that are seeing labour hire workers receives tens of thousands in pay rises? Is it the 15% wage increases for early childhood educators and aged care workers?”

“After a near decade of record low wage growth under the previous Federal Liberal Government, wages are finally moving again at a rate faster than the cost of living. Tasmanian workers already have the lowest wages in the country. We need to send representatives to Canberra who are going to fight for higher wages for our state, not people who are happy for workers to be paid even less than the minimum wage,” said Ms Munday.

When: Today, Thursday 1 May

Where: Liberal Senator Richard Colbeck's office, 5 – 7 Best Street, Devonport

Time: 12:30pm

For further information: Jessica Munday 0417 454 809