



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

17<sup>th</sup> April 2002

### **Windsor supports SACS Award Groups' protest**

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor today joined with Community Groups in the Armidale Mall protesting against the Federal Government's decision not to match the State Government's increase in the Social and Community Services (SACS) Award.

Mr Windsor asked the Federal Government in the last sitting of Parliament to reconsider its decision **NOT** to match the New South Wales Government's increase in the SACS Award as their decision is impacting heavily on the ability of many groups providing essential community services to continue.

"The types of Community Groups affected by the SACS Award decision include Youth Refuges, Women's Refuges and Community Legal Services to name just a few.

The Commonwealth argues that wage increases have been indexed over a period of time and are built into the grant funding that is allocated to these particular organisations, but when you look at the Armidale Youth Refuge, for instance, over the last three years and with the projections for the coming year, there has been a 4% increase in the funding package and a 17% increase in costs.

The Commonwealth Government logic in terms of this issue is severely flawed.

They must see the extent of the negative impact on people in our communities most in need of support," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor believes that there are hundreds of organisations at risk at the moment because the Federal Government has not seen fit at this particular time to embrace the increases particularly in the salaries but also in other operating costs that have occurred because of the New South Wales Industrial Relations Commission finding.

Mr Windsor told the Federal Parliament that he had received many representations from groups affected by the Federal Government's decision not to match the State increase.

"Many organisations in my electorate are at risk in relation to the delivery of duty of care and the cost structure they are operating under.

This protest by affected groups highlights the extent of the problem and the commitment of the people involved in providing these essential community services to having them maintained.

I again urge the Federal Government to revisit their SACS Award decision and match the State Government's extra commitment," Mr Windsor said.

**For further information contact Tony Windsor on 0427 66 8868 or 0412 916 040**