



Uniting Church in Australia National Assembly

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Uniting Church in Australia Welcomes Cost-of-Living Support but Calls for Greater Action on a Just Economy and Long-Term Solutions

The Uniting Church in Australia welcomes measures in the 2025 Federal Budget to ease cost-of-living pressures for Australian households, but is concerned at the lack of supports for the most vulnerable in our society.

“As a Church, we believe that a just economy serves the common good of all Australians while prioritising those in greatest need,” said Rev Charissa Suli, President of the Uniting Church in Australia.

“As we reflect on budget measures designed to ease financial pressures, we must also ask—who has been left behind? While support for many is welcomed, we cannot ignore the reality that income support payments remain unchanged, leaving too many in our communities struggling below the poverty line. In a nation blessed with abundance, no one should face daily financial insecurity.”

“The Uniting Church commends measures designed to provide relief to Australians struggling with rising costs,” said General Secretary of the Uniting Church Assembly Mr Andrew Johnson.

“A significant investment in Medicare, continuing the energy bill rebate, student debt relief and expanding the First Home Buyers Scheme are all welcome to provide support and reduce inequality. We urge the government to ensure the benefits reach those most in need.”

“We also call upon our decision makers to not lose sight of the need for long-term solutions. While we welcome news that the government will stick to its funding for climate solutions, we need ways to steadily reduce our reliance on fossil fuels or we will continue to see rising power bills and increased spending on disaster recovery.”

In its own response to the Budget last night, UnitingCare Australia said its calls to strengthen the social safety net had gone unheeded.

“Ahead of the budget, we called on the Government to prioritise policies that improve the wellbeing of those who need it most. We called for action to strengthen the social safety net and ensure a successful transition to the new aged care system,” said National Director Claerwen Little.

“We are disappointed that there is no material increase to the base rates of income support for the poorest people in our community, despite the evidence that shows

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beyond a doubt that this will lift people out of poverty and allow them dignity and respect. At some point, a Government needs to be bold and actually raise the rate.”

UnitingWorld National Director Dr Sureka Goringe welcomed the budget announcement to increase aid by \$135.8 million, affirming a commitment to partners in the Asia-Pacific region amidst a rapidly shifting global landscape.

"While traditional donors are scaling back aid, Australia has made it clear that we will not turn our backs on our friends in the region," said Dr Goringe.

"This increase in aid, while very modest as a percentage of the Federal Budget, signals that we are continuing to stand alongside our partners who face escalating challenges from climate change, health crises and economic instability.”

Frontier Services National Director Rob Floyd welcomed targeted funding in areas including food security, disaster resilience, market access and a Buy Australian campaign, but noted more general measures in health, mental health and DFV do not go far enough in addressing the acute needs of people living in communities isolated by distance.

"In delivering what is primarily a pre-election budget, the Federal Government has missed the opportunity to provide clear, targeted funding outcomes that will significantly address the challenges often faced by people in rural and remote communities across Australia."

President Rev Suli said the Uniting Church remains steadfast in its commitment to advocate for a just and compassionate society.

“We will continue to call for policies which uphold the dignity of all people and take seriously the call to ensure long-term safety and stability for all Australians.”

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