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For immediate release

THE GENDER PAY GAP SET TO GROW

The National Union of Students condemns the recently announced cuts to penalty rates which will see female students disproportionately affected.

According to data by Australian Unions, women make up 54.7% of the hospitality industry and make up 54.7% of the retail industry. The government's cuts to penalty rates affect part-time roles in these industries which are usually fulfilled by more women than men. Not to mention that these sectors are predominantly occupied by student workers.

"This government is not doing anything to advance young women or address the growing income inequality between women and men" said NUS Women's Officer Abby Stapleton.

This decision is set to see working students worse off. Students are living further below the poverty line and these pay check cuts will only further impact students from regional and disadvantaged backgrounds, particularly women.

"Students are already struggling to attend university due to the high cost of living and the constant holes being put into the safety net; a safety net that is meant to be in place for our most vulnerable. Female students deserve a pay rise and not a pay cut!" said NUS Welfare Officer Jill Molloy.

The National Union of Students condemns the decision to cut penalty rates and will organise and support actions against this appalling move.

"Yesterday for International Women's day, students mobilised around the country to demand to be supported by their government. We will continue to fight against any cuts which will see women disproportionately affected." Stapleton said.

NUS President, Sophie Johnston spoke yesterday at a UNSW IWD event, "In 2017, the national pay-gap for women remains stubbornly at 17.9% and has not shifted for 30 years... this is an embarrassment to the advancement of us as a nation."

The cut's to penalty rates are unlikely to stop here. Both the 2017 NUS Women's and Welfare departments will be working to protect penalty rates within the "Your Rights at Work, Uni & Home" campaign.

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