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We should be fighting inequality – not leaving people behind

Anglicare Australia will strongly oppose the Government's latest welfare changes, which come at a time of growing concern about rising inequality.

"Inequality is real. It's not something people have imagined," said Anglicare Australia Acting Executive Director Roland Manderson.

Mr Manderson was responding to the latest Essential Media Polling, released today, which shows that only 12 percent of Australians think inequality is getting better and most believe it's getting worse.

"People are already trying their hardest to compete for jobs that just aren't there, find an affordable home, and make ends meet. Those who rely on income support are already living well below the poverty line, and it's getting worse.

"But instead of offering relief, the Government is scapegoating people who need help.

"Next week Parliament will resume and the Government will continue to push its welfare changes, which include introducing pointless and expensive drug tests.

"The countries that have trialled random drug testing have found that it's costly and doesn't achieve anything. In the US, it has cost up \$1600 USD per person.

"This, along with moves to force people to spend their savings before seeking income support and denying help to those harmed by addiction, is a step towards the criminalisation of poverty and disadvantage.

"These changes aren't about evidence, because there isn't any. And they aren't about cutting costs, because we could cut much more from generous tax concessions for people who don't need them. It simply looks like an ideological attack on the social safety net.

"The Government must accept that growing inequality is a problem across Australia and do something about it – not leave people behind."

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