

# THOUSANDS PROTEST AGAINST GOVERNMENT BUDGET



**THOUSANDS MARCH IN BUST THE BUDGET RALLIES ACROSS AUSTRALIA TO OPPOSE ABBOTT GOVERNMENT'S BUDGET CUTS.**

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Thousands of people have turned up to 'Bust the Budget' rallies being held across the country.

Thousands have marched across the nation to protest against the Abbott Government's budget cuts. In Melbourne, reportedly the largest rally in the country, union members joined the elderly and their families at the Bust the Budget rally on St Kilda Road opposite the Arts Centre. Several of the government's budget measures, including the \$7 GP visit co-payment, changes to jobless benefits, a higher pension age and deregulation of university fees have been criticised as unfair.



Anger ... Protesters in Melbourne march towards Parliament House. Picture: Mike Keating. Source: News Corp Australia

The crowd — estimated to be around 12,000-strong — then marched to Parliament House on Spring Street. In Sydney's CBD, more than 2000 people turned out at Sydney Town Hall to voice their anger. . Rally-goers, waving trade union flags and budget-protest placards, converged on St Andrews Square on George Street.

Greens leader Christine Milne told reporters on the scene the protest was borne out of frustration against planned federal cuts to health and welfare spending. "(Tony Abbott) is making life harder for people," Ms Milne said. "He's making life a misery for people who are unemployed and searching for work.



Taking a stand ... the crowds at Sydney's Bust the Budget rally make their point. Source: News Corp Australia

The Greens leader said incoming senators need to listen to the community and block budget measures. "You need to join with us in busting the budget," she said. "Tony Abbott is a crash or crash through prime minister. We have to make sure that in response to this budget we make sure he crashes." Ms Milne said the Greens will not support the GP co-payment scheme.



Blunt message ... protesters carry home-made placards outside Sydney's Town Hall. Source: News Corp Australia

Treasurer Joe Hockey has said the criticism has "drifted to the 1970s class warfare lines" and his budget was about equal opportunity, not equality of outcome. "Our duty is to help Australians to get to the starting line, while accepting that some will run faster than others," he said in June. Unions NSW secretary Mark Lennon said there had not been such continuous outrage against a Budget in 30 years.



Brant Dezylyva and Rebecca Dezylyva join a small but vocal crowd at the rally in Darwin. Source: News Corp Australia

"People are going to come here to Town Hall and make it very loud and clear what they think about what happened on May 13," he said. He urged incoming senators to vote the budget down. In Adelaide, thousands marched from Victoria Square to Parliament House, calling for South Australian members of the Senate to oppose the Budget bills. "We had a very broad cross section of the community," SA Unions state secretary Joe Szakacs told AAP.

"Pensioners, young people, students, working people, people with disabilities, families ... because we know that this budget attacks everybody and no-one is safe. "Collectively now, those people are standing up." "Many I spoke to also said this was the first time they've been to a political rally — saying they feel angry, they feel scared, and it's time to fight back." A few hundred people converged on the lawns in front of Parliament House in Canberra as part of the nationwide protests. A large puppet figure of Tony Abbott, with smoke emitting from his trousers, was greeted by protesters chanting "One term Tony" and "Liar, Liar, Pants on Fire"

<http://www.news.com.au/national/thousands-march-in-bust-the-budget-rallies-across-australia-to-oppose-abbott-governments-budget-cuts/story-fncynjr2-1226979562419>

# FAMILIES MAKE THEIR VOICES HEARD AT BUDGET PROTEST

July 6, 2014 Mahesh Sharma *Technology reporter*



Protesters outside Victoria's parliament house for the Bust the Budget rally on Sunday *Photo: Eddie Jim*

Prams, puppies and even Peppa Pig were the flavour of Melbourne's "Bust the Budget" rally at St Kilda Road's Queen Victoria Gardens, opposite the Arts Centre, on Sunday. Thousands converged there before marching to Parliament House to oppose the Abbott Government's proposed first budget. Designed to capture the attention of senators returning to Parliament on Monday, the rally - one of several staged today across Australia - saw union members and activists march alongside the elderly and their families. They protested against a range of new budget measures including the introduction of fees to visit a GP, the deregulation of tertiary education, and a broken promise to not cut the ABC's budget.

The crowd swelled from hundreds before the mooted kick-off time at 1pm, and estimates of total numbers gathered for the march in Melbourne varied from between 12,000 up to 20,000. Luke Hilakari, Victorian Trades Hall campaigns officer, said that this rally was particularly special because, for the first time, over 80 different community groups, including churches and environment organisations, were uniting for a single cause. "We want Tony Abbott to scrap this budget," Mr Hilakari told protesters. "We reckon rallies like this give courage to senators to stand up for all Australians."

Strewn amongst the banners flagging the presence of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Union and the Australian Services Union were a range of hand-crafted signs promoting more personal agendas, including "turtles need a safe climate," "unicorns say no!" (held aloft by a small girl in a unicorn onesie) and a poster featuring the perennially disapproving internet-star "Grumpy Cat."

The family-friendly nature of the event was evident just prior to Mr Hilakari's speech when, as a folk band was entertaining the crowd with a Bob Marley-style protest song, a little girl complained that she hadn't had an opportunity to pet any of the spoodles, boxers and other dogs in attendance. Her father assured her there would be plenty of chances as the crowd made its way up Swanston St to Parliament (which also saw a newlywed-couple briefly lead the procession).

Ell Jung, from Mentone about 20 kilometres south of Melbourne, brought her two-and-a-half year-old son to the rally, and said the diverse turn-out demonstrated the Abbott overnment's budget had rankled the community. "I think that people from all walks of life have come here today to show their disapproval for the budget," Ms Jung said. Earlier in the day the beloved pastor Father Bob channeled the spirit of the billowing banners promoting the recently-opened musical *Les Miserables* - the French Revolution-era production whose title-song asks "Can you hear the people sing?" -- when he Tweeted "All we are singing is Fair Go for All."

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/families-make-their-voices-heard-at-budget-protest-20140706-zsy2t.html>



## THOUSANDS DESCEND ON SYDNEY CBD TO PROTEST THE BUDGET

July 6, 2014 Stephanie Wood

Thousands of people marched through Sydney CBD protesting the government's budget. *Photo: James Alcock*



Central Sydney has filled with a sea of protesters for the "Bust the Budget" march. Organisers estimated up to 15,000 people joined the rally, which started at Town Hall and proceeded along George Street and up Market Street. Police figures put the number of marchers at 6000.

Organisations estimate 15,000 people showed up to march. Police suggest the number was closer to 6000. *Photo: James Alcock*

The protest was peaceful and police said there had been no reported incidents. Allan Jones, who attended the march with his wife, Veronica Carey, and intellectually disabled son, Ross, said he was concerned about a range of issues. "I'm ashamed to be an Australian at times," Mr Jones said. Mr Jones singled out the treatment of asylum seekers, disability care and cuts to education and the abandonment of the Gonski scheme. "It was a wonderful scheme. We are really disappointed about that."

Mr Jones, 79, who received an OAM in 2005 for services to people with disabilities through his work with the Pittwater-based Sailability NSW, said he also hated the secrecy surrounding the government's refugee policy. Cody Stucker and his wife, Marisa Whittington, attended the rally with their children Freddie, 6, and Jonathan, 2. "I'm worried about education cuts in the budget for these two," said Ms Whittington. Mark Lennon from Unions NSW said the latest federal budget was unfair. "Not only is it unfair, it is deliberately unfair, because this is not just about the budget, this is about a change of the agenda for this nation. "This is about a change in the philosophical direction of the country."

<http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/thousands-descend-on-sydney-cbd-to-protest-the-budget-20140706-zsy20.html>