

2 Speed economy only benefits those in the fast lane

SACOSS has welcomed aspects of tonight's Federal Budget, including its attention to primary health care and renewable energy, however it is a budget clearly targeted in the main at middle-income Australia.

"Health initiatives are possibly the most helpful thing for people faced with social disadvantage – we are pleased at the \$530m investment over the next two years on primary health care and related workforce enhancements, although universal dental care is a critical gap that governments continue to ignore, and the allocation for mental health is underwhelming." said SACOSS Executive Director Ross Womersley.

"Treasurer Swan has clearly delivered a fiscally restrained budget finely tuned to appeal to people in electorates where the government is most vulnerable. Initiatives involving super, tax discounts on savings & tax cuts for small businesses all clearly targeted toward middle income Australians"

"Missed opportunities to bolster secure affordable housing for people on low incomes, and the failure to address the rates of pensions and allowances, remain major disappointments, and the long-term unemployed have yet again been ignored."

"SACOSS nonetheless welcomes a focus on skills development and a return to funding adult literacy and numeracy programmes."

"Also welcome is the \$13m over two years to establish the new National Congress of Australia's First Peoples, and \$14m over two years to extend access to Opal fuel to prevent petrol sniffing."

"SACOSS welcomes the considerable investment in the renewable energy future fund, and the expansion of the green home sustainability assessments, however express disappointment that there is no substitute for the insulation or Green Start programs."