

Media release

5 December 2014

Tax and budget cuts – a double disadvantage for Australian women

Women could be made billions of dollars better off if the Government considered gender issues when formulating the Budget, a new report from The Australia Institute reveals.

Released today, *The budget's hidden gender agenda* report finds that - in good times and in bad - women are getting a rougher deal than men from budget and income tax cuts.

“For women, it’s a double disadvantage - they’ve benefited less from income tax incentives dealt out during the mining boom, and yet they stand to be burdened most heavily by the government’s budget cuts,” said the report’s author, Matt Grudnoff of The Australia Institute.

The report finds that, although women account for almost half of the workforce (46 per cent), they have enjoyed only a 32 per cent share of income tax cuts dealt out since 2005. Of a cumulative total \$169 billion delivered back to workers, \$115 billion has gone to men, and \$54 billion has gone to women.

“Income tax cuts have been a popular policy choice for successive Australian governments, but we have seen much faster growth in after-tax income for men than for women in the past decade,” Mr Grudnoff explained.

“Men dominate the top 10 per cent of income earners, who together benefitted more from those tax cuts than the bottom 80 per cent of taxpayers combined.

“It’s a disparity that points to the broader disadvantages that women continue to face in the workforce, but it doesn’t stop there.

“Less taxes means less revenue, and now we see Prime Minister Abbott severely cutting into social services to repair what he refers to as a ‘budget emergency’”

“Women earn less and stand to lose more, with 55 per cent of the government’s budget cuts set to come from the pockets of Australian women between now and 2017,” Mr Grudnoff said.

“Tax cuts aren’t the only way or even the best way to deliver benefits back to the workforce. They have exacerbated the gender income gap. The government needs to recognise that when considering tax rates and social services, to ensure they benefit all Australians.”

For comment, please contact: **Matt Grudnoff 0402 483 782**