

# to deadline



# Band together to oppose uni campus move

Strong voices of UTAS students are raised in unison to share their concerns about a city move

AS the plans currently exist, the University of Tasmania's city move will be detrimental to the University and undermine the quality of our education and the education of future generations.

The move away from a central campus will have a negative impact on the student community, interdisciplinary interaction and collaboration across the learning areas, and ultimately destroy campus life. There are a range of reasons why the voters of Hobart should vote no to the University's plans in the elector poll.

First, the proposed city facilities will not be fit-for-purpose and do not cater to our needs or the needs of staff. The loss of amenities at Sandy Bay will be significant and a highly fragmented city campus will compromise the educational experience.

The Forestry Building is an example of a trend where future facilities will be inadequate. For the entirety of law, business and economics there will be no lecture theatres, fewer tutorial rooms and open-plan offices for staff and postgraduate students against their wishes.

This is a sign of things to come as the University downsizes to cut costs at the expense of our education and a face-to-face learning environment.

Second, the decision to move and subsequent planning has lacked genuine and proper consultation. Proper consultation should be where the University responds to negative feedback in a constructive way and should aim to work with us rather than dismiss our views.

The University's approach should be driven by the interests of students and staff rather than the blind pursuit of ideology. Currently, the University has demonstrated an inability to listen.

Third, the city move will not make tertiary education more accessible while other significant barriers exist. If the University is truly concerned about accessibility

then it would work to reduce the costs of education and other barriers. A 3km move will not achieve any greater level of educational attainment.

Fourth and finally, the loss of green space and the demolition of buildings at the Sandy Bay campus as well as significant development and refurbishments in the CBD is not a sustainable decision.

The University could be much more sustainably and environmentally responsible if it simply refurbished the Sandy Bay campus for the benefit of students and staff for decades to come.

Further, the Sandy Bay campus includes habitat for the critically endangered Swift Parrot.

There have been multiple daily sightings of these birds this Spring already.

The campus in its current state offers established protection of this critical habitat, and it offers students the tangible opportunity to experience and contemplate the role society plays in retaining a sense of place - for all species.

Ultimately, this move disregards our interests and the interests of prospective students. It is driven by purely commercial reasons for the purpose of maximising profit.

Please vote no to the University's city move.

**Joshua Blum Tasmanian University Medical Students' Society, Fletcher Clarke Tasmania University Law Society, Felix Fischer Tasmanian University Engineering Society, Lauren Harvey Tasmanian Education Society, William Grant mathematics and Physics Society, Kt Lertsinpakdee Tasmanian University Medical Research Students' Society, McKinley Nolan Tasmanian Association of Pharmacy Students, Samantha Climie Student Environment and Animal Law Society, Bico Ngu Malaysia Students' Society Tasmania, Golden AM Lewis UTAS Japan Society, Liam McLaren Tasmanian University Environment Society, Michael Steel UTAS Agricultural Science Society**

# and economic future of selfless carers

enough, the Carer Payment is significantly lower than most weekly earnings. It's equal to only 28 per cent of average Australian weekly earnings for singles and 21 per cent for couples.

With just under 75 per cent of carers being women, this is also a gendered issue.

In 2021, the Carers Australia network, which includes Carers Tasmania, commissioned the Caring Costs Us report to identify the impact on lifetime earnings and retirement savings.

The report findings make

for confronting reading.

On average, every year in Australia, a carer will lose \$17,700 in superannuation and \$39,600 in lifetime earnings. By age 67, that is \$392,500 and \$175,000 respectively.

The most affected carers will lose \$940,000 in income and \$444,500 in retirement savings by age 67.

It doesn't have to be this way. Caring Costs Us provides clear guidance for improving the economic security of predominantly female informal carers, which could avoid carers retiring into

poverty, plus have a positive, long-term impact on the Federal Budget.

Introducing a Superannuation Guarantee Contribution for the Carer Payment is the way forward.

An increase in a carer's superannuation of about \$52,000 by age 67 will translate to less reliance on the aged care pension. The knock-on effect for government is a budget saving of \$84,000 for the carer's post-67 years.

Although the initial cost would be higher, the long-term benefit to the budget is

significantly more. That should be music to the ears of Treasurers around the nation.

This is a positive, long-term initiative that Treasury could adopt, and it fits with the need for governments to address structural deficits in the post-Covid era. It also makes sense in the context of a rapidly ageing population.

More also could be done to support carers to remain in paid employment and also undertake unpaid informal care responsibilities.

Two inquiries are currently examining caring and work.

The Productivity Commission is examining the economic and social impacts of providing an additional unpaid leave entitlement to carers supporting older Australians.

At the same time, a Federal Parliamentary Select Committee is investigating the extent of balancing work and care and the impacts that this has on the wellbeing of workers, carers, and the people being cared for. We have recommended leave entitlements and flexible work arrangements that enable carers to balance work and

caring. Carers also need targeted support to re-enter work after what are often long periods of informal care.

The bottom line is that it makes sense for State and Federal Budgets, for employers, for the economy and most importantly for carers, to take steps to secure the employment and economic future of carers.

It's the 30th National Carer Week. A big milestone. Let's match it with some big-thinking reform.

**David Brennan is CEO of Carers Tasmania.**