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**MEDIA RELEASE**

**ABBOTT'S CHRISTMAS EVE CUTS TO DISABILITY ORGANISATIONS**

Tony Abbott has taken the knife to key disability organisations, just days before Christmas.

A consortium with widespread disability sector support, led by the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO), was told yesterday that they would not be receiving any funding.

This includes organisations like Autism Asperger's Advocacy Australia, Blind Citizens Australia, Deaf Australia, Down Syndrome Australia and the National Council on Intellectual Disability.

Both outgoing Minister Kevin Andrews and incoming Minister Scott Morrison were too heartless and gutless to face these organisations, instead ordering the Department to make the calls.

These organisations, representing over 90 per cent of Australians with disability, will be forced to close their doors or cut back services drastically as a result of these cuts.

This is a cruel and callous attack on organisations that provide a much needed voice for people with disability in our community.

Tony Abbott has delivered a horror year for people with disability, their families and carers.

Before the election, Tony Abbott promised there would no changes to pensions. Yet his Budget will leave people on the Disability Support Pension and Carer Payment \$80 a week worse off.

Kevin Andrews made a habit this year of standing up in the media with no purpose other than to demonise people with disability – particularly young people with disability and people living with mental illness, in a shameless attempt to pave the way for the Abbott Government's savage cuts.

The Abbott Government also abolished Australia's full time Disability Discrimination Commissioner – an important advocate for people with disability, especially as the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) rolls out across the country.

Kevin Andrews leaves behind a shameful legacy in disability policy.

Sadly for people with disability and indeed all Australians, it now falls to the likes of Scott Morrison to reject these cuts and deliver the services and opportunities that Australians with disability deserve.

Scott Morrison must stand up to Tony Abbott and Joe Hockey and scrap their cruel budget cuts, and immediately reverse the latest of these disgusting cuts, delivered on the eve of Christmas.

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