

# OUR AGENDA FOR TAKING BACK CONTROL



## PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITY

Governments must ensure that they act in the best interest of their communities by providing quality public services. The provision of essential services should be their highest priority. Privatisation should only be considered if it has been demonstrated to be in the best interest of communities and the best use of taxpayer funding.

***We are calling for a moratorium on privatisation until greater regulatory mechanisms and proper policy frameworks are implemented around the delivery of public services.***

Governments at all levels must ensure there are safeguards to protect service-users, workers, and the broader community in the event of privatisation, and there should be strict criteria established to determine whether or not privatisation should proceed.

Specifically, legislation should ensure that -

1. Prior to making a decision for any new privatisation, the government must:
  - a. Provide details of all the proposed benefits, sources of savings and evaluation of costs to the public;
  - b. Make an overwhelming case for net public benefit, including a comparison of service provision and access to prove why delivery of services cannot be maintained by the government;
  - c. Define minimum qualifications for new employees prior to privatising;
  - d. Prohibit any company that has evaded taxes or broken the law from taking over public services
2. Where there is a privatised service, governments must take back the regulatory space and set the rules. An independent regulatory body should oversee privatised assets and services to ensure accountability.
3. The government must continue to employ sufficient, qualified staff to evaluate the quality and competence of service providers, and to provide a continued role in strategic advice. Departments of government should not be



privatising decisions to consulting and / or accountancy firms.

4. There must be NO commercial-in-confidence when taking public money.
5. If a service is to be privatised, the government must set a fixed budget to ensure cost is removed from the decision process and tenderers are competing on the basis of quality only. This prevents it being a race to the bottom.
6. Where privatisation occurs, the new provider must, as a minimum, maintain the same employment conditions and standards as the government service it replaced in regards to:
  - a. Wages and conditions of employment
  - b. Health and safety
  - c. Equal opportunity employment
  - d. Codes of ethics and other codes of practice
7. Governments must take back control of failed privatisations.
8. All privatised services that receive government funding to provide a public service are to publish a report annually to ensure services and infrastructure that use public money are open, transparent and delivered to the highest quality. These must contain:
  - a. A log of all complaints
  - b. A comprehensive and detailed, up-to-date cost of services, detailing government funds received and where the money has been spent
  - c. Measurable key performance indicators (KPIs)
  - d. Feedback from service users on quality
  - e. Changes to workloads from employment conditions over the short and long term
  - f. Evidence that minimum staffing numbers and standards, including conditions for staff, are met and that accredited qualifications are recognised
9. Not-for-profit organisations should be free to make public comment and advocate on behalf of their communities, and funding for services should not be linked to the ability of the provider to comment on government policy or grow the organisation
10. Governments must not lock the public into long privatisation contracts. The legislation must include provisions for government to take back control of a service or asset at any time, where it is deemed that the privatisation is no longer in the public interest.

## TAKING BACK CONTROL

There is an urgent need to restore public confidence in the provision of failed privatisations, in particular:

- TAFE - governments must immediately rebuild the public sector role in TAFE by reinvesting in the public TAFE colleges and removing public funding from private vocational colleges. Private providers should be strongly regulated.
- Disability services - governments must immediately act to ensure the retention of existing (or creation/re-creation where they don't exist) government facilities and staffing for those with complex needs.
- Prisons - governments must immediately take back control of the management and the delivery of services and programs to prisoners in all prisons and juvenile justice facilities.
- Land Titles - governments must take back control and ensure the retention of Land Titles Registries in each state.



# STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITY

Governments at all levels need to act immediately to protect against the negative impacts of privatisation. But we also need to build an alternative to privatisation and the erosion of our public services. We believe governments must ensure that everyone in our community can access quality public services. Governments should do the following to ensure public services and assets meet the needs of current and future generations:

1. Governments must direct adequate and stable funding to both the public sector and the not-for-profit sector, to enable each to carry out their respective roles in our community.
2. Governments must rebuild public assets and public sector capability in new areas, for example clean energy, digital technology, and new infrastructure such as housing and transport.

# JOIN US IN TAKING BACK CONTROL OF OUR COMMUNITIES.

