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## **INJURED WORKERS' LIVES TO BECOME INCREASINGLY BLEAK UNDER SA WORKCOVER CHANGES**

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The quality of life for injured workers in South Australia is set to become bleaker following a WorkCover decision to change eligibility rules for workers' compensation payments, peak legal body representing the rights of injured workers, the Australian Lawyers Alliance, said today.

"The new redemption policy, that comes in to effect in July, means injured workers will have to undergo a new, flawed test for their work capacity that fails to accurately assess their ability to work and cuts them off from income maintenance after 130 weeks pay," Australian Lawyers Alliance (SA) President, Tony Kerin, said.

"It means the vast majority of those on workers' compensation and income maintenance payments will be left out in the cold because of a desire to make WorkCover look financially healthier rather than improving health outcomes for injured workers," he said.

"The reality is that many people, partially incapacitated, suffer employer prejudice in the labour marketplace and find it difficult to reestablish themselves back at work.

The release this week of the parliamentary inquiry report shows government bureaucrats are more concerned about business and levies rather than injured workers' rights and their entitlements to compensation," Mr Kerin said.

The report concluded and recommended, in part, that the inefficiencies of management (which were overlooked in the most recent evaluation of WorkCover, the Clayton Walsh Review) had been allowed to prosper to the detriment of injured workers.

“This debt burden should not be born by these vulnerable people losing entitlements and support,” Mr Kerin said.

“It is hoped transparency and a focus on the managerial efficiency of WorkCover will be adopted by whoever succeeds at the next election.

Meanwhile injured workers will continue to suffer,” he said.

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