

Media Release

April 17, 2019

United Voice welcomes Minister Lensink's decision to Keep Disability SA

Yesterday the State Government advised that they would not pursue their proposal to privatise Accommodation Services at this time.

United Voice Branch Secretary David Di Troia says, "This is a welcome step in the right direction.

"Consultation by the State Government clearly showed that workers, families and people living with disabilities were strongly against the plan to privatise.

"This announcement shows that Minister Lensink has listened to the voices of people living with disabilities, their families and workers in the sector."

In June 2018, the Marshall State Government announced their intention to privatise disability services in supported community accommodation.

In response, hundreds of people supported by these services, their family and friends, workers, and the wider community launched a campaign to "Keep Disability SA".

The campaign called on the State Government to reverse their decision to privatise disability services, and commit to delivering high quality services to South Australians in to the future.

"The original proposal to privatise these services was ill-conceived. Workers in these services typically support some of the highest needs people living with disabilities that many non-government providers lack the facilities, expertise or willingness to support.

"Privatisation would have led to serious consequences, including limiting choice, the loss of specialised services, a lack of continuity for people living with disabilities, and the loss of experienced and skilled workers in a sector plagued by chronic staffing shortages, and over 500 people being forced into a private sector that has demonstrated it is incapable of meeting their complex needs.

"To her credit, Minister Lensink has clearly taken on board the serious concerns raised by this union-led community campaign. Our campaign will continue until the State Government completely scraps its plan to privatise these services."

Keep Disability SA is a coalition of families, friends, employees, their union United Voice, and South Australians supported by government disability services.

United Voice represents thousands of South Australians who work in government disability services.

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