Dear Prime Minister,

I write in relation to the Government's decision to freeze wage pay rises for Commonwealth Public Servants for a period of six months.

These are unprecedented times and the role Australian Public Service and other Commonwealth employees are playing throughout the COVID-19 pandemic is critical. At a time when Commonwealth employees are working harder than ever, and in many cases are exposed to risk of infection every day as they serve the public, the Government’s decision is particularly disappointing.

In addition to the critical role Commonwealth employees are playing, in our view the decision also does not make economic sense. At a time when the government is pursuing a range of significant policy announcements to stimulate the economy and keep people spending, freezing the wages of workers is likely to undermine those efforts. Furthermore, the budgetary saving of delaying pay rises in terms of overall government spending is miniscule, but to Commonwealth employees the impact will be much more significant and have flow on impact for local businesses and communities.

This wage freeze also follows a long period of real wage decline in the Australian Public Service, where the majority of workers received no pay increase from 2013 – 2017.

This is an unnecessary measure and the decision should be reversed by Government.

Our members are working tirelessly to deliver services to the Australian communities, and the policy responses required, to manage this pandemic. I ask that your Government
reconsider this decision and show its support for APS employees by honouring agreed wage rises as they become due.

I can be contacted directly on the details below or Karen Atherton our National Political Coordinator can be contacted on 0417 885 160.

Yours sincerely

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National Secretary

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