



Media Release – Thursday 16 April 09

In challenging times, Victorian Budget must maintain focus on vulnerable

“Mr Brumby is correct: now is not the time to reduce Victorian Government revenue measures. These funds are needed for programs to support the vulnerable members of our society,” said Denis Fitzgerald, Executive Director, Catholic Social Services Victoria, in welcoming Premier John Brumby’s announcement that there would be no tax cuts in next month’s Victorian State Budget.

“In difficult times, the more vulnerable members of our society are most at risk. Our common good as a society depends on our working together to assist those most in need. Respect for their human dignity is linked to our health as a society.”

Mr Fitzgerald said now is not the time to reduce Victorian Government expenditure in critical areas.

“Programs in many areas are already under financial pressure. To name just a few: programs to address homelessness; to assist people with disabilities; to provide adequate mental health prevention and care. We need to provide levels of support for these activities to ensure that they are sustainable, and that they can reach those most in need.

“Rising levels of unemployment put additional pressure on many of these services,” Mr Fitzgerald said.

“The Victorian Government must play its part in building a strong economy for the benefit of all, but reduction in revenue measures at this time would be counterproductive. The funds are needed for programs that are a priority for our society.”

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Media inquiries: James O’Farrell, Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne on 0437 661 030.

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Catholic Social Services Victoria is a peak body for Catholic social service agencies in Victoria. We work with member agencies, as part of the Catholic Church in Victoria, to fulfil the gospel imperatives to stand with and serve the poor, disadvantaged and marginalised, and to work for a just, equitable and compassionate society. Further information about Catholic Social Services Victoria can be found on our website: www.css.org.au

Our policy analysis, and our response to marginalisation and disadvantage, builds on the principles of Catholic social teaching. These are based on gospel values and the collective reflection and experience over time of the application of those values in working with the poor, the disadvantaged and the marginalised. Our members continue in this tradition in applying these principles to contemporary issues.