

Pathology campaign points to bloody election battle

Top 10 Government marginal seat MPs could lose their seat over issue

MELBOURNE: Over half a million Australians have signed the Don't Kill Bulk Bill petition opposing the Federal Government's bulk billing incentive funding cut to pathology. The grassroots response in just 8 weeks shows this will be a major election issue. The number of petition signatures in the top ten marginal seat electorates is greater than their margin in the 2013 election.

Petition sign ups to Don't Kill Bulk Bill campaign in top 10 Government marginal seats

Electorate	MP	Vote margin in 2013 election	Number of petition signatures in electorate
Barton (NSW)	Nikolas Varvaris	489	4,821
Petrie (QLD)	Luke Howarth	871	4,354
Eden-Monaro (NSW)	Peter Hendy	1,085	3,402
Dobell (NSW)	Karen McNamara	1,166	1,909
Capricornia (QLD)	Michelle Landry	1,305	4,785
Reid (NSW)	Craig Laundry	1,460	1,654
O'Connor (WA)	Rick Wilson	1,570	2,140
Lyons (TAS)	Eric Hutchinson	1,631	2,628
Braddon (TAS)	Brett Whiteley	3,380	6,004
Gilmore (NSW)	Ann Sudmalis	4,807	8,310

- Patients are worried about these cuts; at the current rate by 1st July over a million patients will have signed the petition.
- Clinical demand for medical tests is growing each year to prevent or manage disease, but funding is continually cut.
- The Government's bulk billing incentive fee cut amounts to a cut in funding for pathology of 4% was dropped on the sector like a bombshell.
- Australian pathology is cheaper than comparable countries including USA and Canada according to a new EY report showing Australian pathology provided Government with \$2.4 billion in savings in 2014/15. The Grattan Institute February report failed to account for the drastic impact of 'coning' on pathology payments - its international cost comparisons were not correct.
- Pathology companies cannot absorb these cuts. Services will close and patient co-payments must be introduced to meet the funding shortfall.
- This will affect all Australians but will hit hardest the elderly, pregnant women and those who are already sick.
- The petition is available for online signatures at www.dontkillbulkbill.com

Dr Nick Musgrave, President of Pathology Australia is available for interview. Patient case studies of people affected by the cuts available nationally.

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