

30 July 2008

Provest backs Tweed emergency services and teachers industrial action

"I know just how hard these people work, often in dangerous conditions..."

Tweed Nationals MP Geoff Provest today said hardworking Tweed police, ambulance and fire officers and public school teachers had every right to take industrial action after the lemma Government duded them with pay cuts in real terms.

"I have been out on night shifts with Tweed police and ambos and I know just how hard these people work, often in dangerous conditions," Mr Provest said.

"The lemma Government has limited salary changes to 2.5 per cent. With inflation now running at over 4 per cent - that is a pay cut."

"These frontline officers are paying the price for the lemma Government's economic incompetence. If Labor can't balance the books, it should sack some its fat cat bureaucrats, not frontline workers in the Tweed."

"How can lemma possibly justify these pay cuts, when it is forking out about \$1000 a day for people like North Coast Area Health Service boss Chris Crawford?"

Mr Provest said the targeted industrial action like refusing to collect fines and fees was appropriate and reasonable.

"This is not putting anyone at risk, it only hurts State Government coffers," he said.

Mr Provest said he again found himself siding with the union movement against Labor, after he had already backed their opposition to power privatisation.

I fully agree with Unions NSW Secretary John Robertson who said of the lemma Government's wages plan, "*at best, the policy is naive and stupid. At worst, it is insulting.*" [*The Australian*, 30/7/08]