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Media Release: Unions Tasmania celebrates Saputo mainland pay parity victory

Unions Tasmania is today celebrating the news that Saputo workers in Burnie have won a 21.7% pay rise, achieving mainland pay parity with their Victorian counterparts and ending their epic battle with the company after 20 weeks on strike.

We congratulate and pay tribute to the strength and resolve of members of the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union (AMWU) and the Communications Electrical and Plumbing Union (CEPU) who stood firm for the fundamental principle that Tasmanian workers deserve to be paid the same as mainland workers for doing the same job.

“We were proud to stand beside members at Saputo as they took on a multinational for mainland pay parity – and won,” said Unions Tasmania Secretary, Jessica Munday.

“This dispute was a lightning rod for Tasmanian workers all over our state, not only because of the incredible commitment of the workers to take such significant industrial action at great personal cost, but because it caused other workers to look at their own wages and ask whether they were being ripped off too.”

Battles for mainland wages have been increasing in Tasmania as workers in both the private and public sector are demanding an end to being paid less just because of where we live.

“We’ve seen workers in the Tasmanian public sector across areas such as child safety, pharmacy, radiography, utilities, and even in our workplace safety regulator take industrial action in support of mainland wages. We’re seeing wins too with pharmacists achieving a market allowance of thousands of dollars to bridge the gap between wages here and interstate.”

“What we know is that one victory in one workplace spurs on workers in others. The Saputo win will absolutely be motivation for Tasmanian workers to continue to work with their unions to win mainland pay parity in their workplace, sector, or industry,” said Ms Munday.

“The community is going to be hearing it more and more from Tassie workers – same job, same pay,” said Ms Munday.

Unions Tasmania is encouraging the community to end the Saputo product boycott and again fill their trolleys with products including Cheer, Cracker Barrell, Devondale, Great Ocean Road, King Island Dairy, Liddells, Mersey Valley, Mil Lel, South Cape, Sungold and Tasmanian Heritage

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