

Residents face legal black hole

SOME Bundaberg residents may not be able to access free legal help under government cuts to community legal services.

The Palaszczuk Government is calling on the Turnbull Government to reverse the \$2 million cut to the service, which helped vulnerable people in the region seek justice.

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice Yvette D'Ath said the Federal Government's cuts to Community Legal Centres would stop some Bundaberg residents being able to access free legal help.

"These funding cuts could force the Taylor Street Community Legal Centre to reduce their services, close branch offices and telephone advice lines, and sack staff," Mrs D'Ath said.

"I urge the Federal Government to reverse the funding cuts and invest in Community Legal Centres, including Taylor Street Community Legal Centre, to ensure residents get the

legal help they need."

Mrs D'Ath said the Taylor Street Community Legal Centre helped the community's most vulnerable people who could not afford a lawyer and were not eligible for government legal aid.

"Taylor Street Community Legal Centre helps people with a wide range of legal problems, including family violence, relationship breakdowns and family law, debt, consumer problems, tenancy disputes, and employment issues," Mrs D'Ath said.

"These people are among the most disadvantaged in our communities and we need to support them as much as possible and think about how much we can help them.

Under the National Partnership Agreement on Legal Assistance, national funding for Community Legal Centres will be slashed from \$42.2 million in 2016-17 to \$30.1 million in 2017-18.