**Divestment motion for branches of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF); Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU); Health Services Union (HSU) and United Voice**

Below is a sample motion that members of the ANMF, ACTU, HSU and United Voice can use to call on HESTA to divest from the mandatory detention industry.

“That the …. [Branch Committee] endorse the following statement of policy and actions. This motion should be communicated to the [Union] [State] Division Executive and to the [Union] National Executive. It should form the basis of a motion to go before the [Union] National Council.

Australia’s practice of mandatory detention of refugees is wrong. As staff in the health and community services sector, we see the effects of this policy in terms of poor health and repeat hospitalisation of those in detention. We note with alarm the recent reports into conditions at the Nauru and Manus Island detention facilities, and the lack of access to medical care. We note that doctors, nurses and other health and community sector and welfare workers have roundly condemned the practice of mandatory detention and the particular facilities, Manus and Nauru, currently operated by Transfield Services. We note that welfare sector staff have been threatened with criminal prosecution for blowing the whistle on the appalling conditions in Nauru, including for reporting the sexual abuse of children.

Mandatory detention only occurs because of government support and commercial investment. Stopping this regime requires persuading and pressuring those parties to withdraw their support. Unions which sit on the HESTA board, such as the Australian Services Union, have already made commitments to withdraw their support for Transfield, stating: “Social and community workers do not want their retirement savings used to support a system of mandatory detention of asylum seekers and believe it is immoral for corporations to profit from the indefinite and inhuman detention of other human beings.” We support this position.

[Union’s] role on the HESTA Board gives [Union] members the power to have real influence in the corporate decision-making of this industry super fund. HESTA’s decision on whether or not to purchase shares in corporations that take contracts to imprison asylum seekers can make a significant difference to the capacity and willingness of entities such as Transfield to collaborate in this abusive regime.

While Unions and community sector organisations do not exercise complete control over HESTA decisions, they have an important say in the investment decisions of the fund. This statement commits [Union] to take action to divest completely from mandatory detention, beginning with divestment from Transfield. We insist that HESTA clearly and unambiguously disassociate and divest itself from companies that receive money for the mandatory detention of asylum seekers.

[Union] officers will make clear representations to HESTA, calling on its Board of Directors to change the fund’s investment practices in keeping with the values of this statement. This implies an important role for Union-nominated members of the HESTA Board to push for these changes and importantly, to keep members informed of the progress towards this goal.

Furthermore, we call on the Australian Council of Trade Unions to act on its stated opposition to mandatory detention to call for a change in HESTA’s practices so that it completely and permanently divests from companies involved in mandatory detention.”