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Federal Government funding cuts to higher education put hundreds of SA jobs at risk while students are forced to pay more for less.

The Group of Eight (Go8), which represents Australia's eight leading research-intensive universities, including the University of Adelaide, wants South Australians to recognise the significant impact to jobs and students that will occur in SA if the Federal Government's higher education cuts pass the Senate.

"It is not widely known that the State's three universities together comprise the State's largest employer after the public service," says Go8 Chief Executive Vicki Thomson. "The cuts therefore loom large here. At the University of Adelaide it could lead to the potential loss of 152 full time jobs either directly or indirectly employed by the university.

"The Go8 is urging the Nick Xenophon Team to block the legislation in its entirety, and we are hopeful those Senators can see through the Government's disingenuous presentation of the cuts and recognise the social, financial and economic damage to our State that they would cause.

"SA will suffer more per capita from the funding cuts than any other state," said Ms Thomson, "so if the Xenophon team does not block the cuts, South Australian students will be badly affected and many South Australian jobs may go.

"The impact on Adelaide will be compounded in some of the State's smaller population centres where there are either university health centres, campuses or study centres such as Mount Barker, Victor Harbor, Murray Bridge, Port Pirie, Whyalla and Port Augusta."

Ms Thomson said that the State's universities were now at the mercy of Senator Xenophon and his team.

"We simply have to trust in them to help protect our State from cuts that, as an example, wipe some \$26 million from the University of Adelaide's annual budget. There is nowhere for us to go in 2017, given the severity of continued funding cuts, except to reduce our workforce and see students suffer at the Government's hands. That is not something the Go8 can reconcile nor SA's fragile economy can afford to have happen."

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