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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **BUSINESS OWNERS CRUSHED BY CONSTRUCTION JUGGERNAUGHT**

The NSW Transport Minister's scepticism about claims that businesses are suffering significant losses because of construction across Sydney, on Radio 2GB yesterday morning, highlighted that the Government is out of touch with what's happening on the ground.

Business owner and independent City of Sydney Councillor, Angela Vithoukas who also appeared on radio 2GB yesterday said "business owners are getting squeezed from both ends – on one side they are locked into long term tenancy agreements and on the other they have been put into the too hard basket by the State government".

"It's no secret that I have been an outspoken opponent about the way that small business has been treated throughout the construction process. I went on radio yesterday morning after once again being approached by business owners who were at their wits end".

While business owners have been reluctant to come forward, they have now reached a point where they believe have nothing to lose.

Sydney CBD restaurateur, Peter Tressos said "we are no longer able to wait out the construction period. More needs to be done to assist long time tenants of this city. When the government compulsorily acquires residential property, owners are compensated. There is no talk of compensation when we are impacted through no fault of our own".

Another Sydney CBD business owner, David Tracey owner of Steel Bar & Grill said "we need Government to understand what's going on at ground level. Our business is sandwiched between major Government and private construction sites. While they talk about an upturn once construction is finalised we want to let them know that approach is not going to work, it just means that small business will be wiped out".

Angela Vithoukas believes there is scope within the Retail Leases Act to encourage rent relief to those impacted by construction.

"I want to hear all the stories from all over Sydney and NSW and I want to encourage all small business owners and residents who are impacted by state significant infrastructure and or private construction to contact me and share their stories.

"Having met twice with Andrew Constance, senior bureaucrat's and attended 2 years of meetings partaking in these discussions, I now believe that only Premier Gladys Berejiklian can assist. On behalf of all the small business owners right across Sydney and NSW this is a plea for our new Premier to hear our plight. I look forward to meeting with her and several small business owners to work out a real solution that will actually have an effect", Angela Vithoulkas said.

For further details/information or to interview Angela Vithoulkas and the other business owners please phone:

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