

Friday, 17 July 2015

The evidence is clear; Abbott Government must fix broken system

The Senate inquiry into temporary work visas is holding its final sitting in Canberra today concluding weeks of hearings shedding light on Australia's issue-riddled work visa system.

The Senate inquiry has previously held hearings in Brisbane, Sydney, Perth and Adelaide with evidence of shocking exploitation of overseas workers and the negative impact an uncapped system is having on job and training opportunities for Australian workers.

The Senate Inquiry report into the temporary visa system will be handed down on 22 August.

The Abbott Government must act on this alarming evidence of the abuse of international workers and missed job opportunities for Australian workers under the temporary visa system.

Unions are calling for caps, tougher requirements that call for employers to hire local workers before recruiting from overseas and stronger training obligations for employers who use 457 visas.

This should include requirements to train Australian apprentices and hire new graduates in the same occupations where temporary visa holders are being employed.

Should changes recommended by unions be applied to the 457 visa system then around 7000 new jobs would be created.

Quotes attributed to ACTU President Ged Kearney:

"The Senate Inquiry into temporary visas has heard shocking evidence of abuse of vulnerable foreign workers and missed job and training opportunities for Australians – the Abbott Government must take action.

"We are seeing workers on temporary visas being exploited while at the same time Australians are missing out on job opportunities – the temporary visa system is broken and must be fixed.

"The government needs to cap temporary visa numbers and ensure that employers who use this system and trying to hire local workers and investing in training and apprenticeships."

"Employment and training opportunities for people today will benefit Australia long into the future. It's time we look ahead instead of simply reacting to short-term demands."

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