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## O'Dwyer backs business, betrays working people

The peak body for working people has slammed Industrial Relations Minister Kelly O'Dwyer's decision to back a massive foreign-owned labour hire business in a court case about the rights of casual workers.

The Minister's decision to intervene on the side of the company is evidence that she is governing in in the interests of big business rather than those of working people.

The case, which the company is seeking to be heard by the Full Federal Court, is an attempt to sidestep a recent decision of the court in the case of *Workpac V Skene*. In that earlier case the Court found that a worker who had been incorrectly classified as a casual by the company was entitled to the payment of accrued leave after his employment had come to an end. The company decided not to appeal that earlier decision.

The intervention comes after questions were raised about collusion between the Morrison Government, Workpac and private lobbying companies when leaked emails between lobbyists and parliamentarians appeared to show that the Morrison Government was directing lobbying efforts to pass legislation that would overturn the decision and erode the rights of working people.

### Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O'Neil:

"This is the Minister once again coming down on the side of big business and against the pay and rights of ordinary workers.

"The court has rightly exposed that big business has been cheating workers out of their entitlements. To use taxpayer money to undermine that decision shows how biased and out of touch Kelly O'Dwyer and the Morrison Government are.

"There is a long history of case law about what makes a person a casual and it is very clear that people who have fixed and continuous work are entitled to accrued leave.

"Big businesses in the labour hire industry have been caught abusing the casual classification and they're trying to escape paying working people the money they're owed.

"Kelly O'Dwyer is helping them keep them myth of the 'permanent casual' alive and to strip workers of their rights.

"At a time when more than 40 percent of Australian are in insecure or non-standard forms of work, when wage growth is at near-record lows, working people should have a Minister that stands up for their rights.

"Instead they have one who joins cashed-up foreign-owned businesses and high-priced lawyers who are trampling those rights.

"I call on the Minister to withdraw her intervention in this court case and to speak out for the rights of working people as they were made clear in *Workpac V Skene* and many earlier cases."

**ENDS**

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