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Morrison Government soft on super theft

The peak body for working people has called for the superannuation enforcement duties of the ATO to be extended to the industrial umpire after a senate committee heard the tax office was routinely allowing super theft to go unpunished.

Under the Morrison/Turnbull/Abbott Government, the ATO has failed to impose the maximum penalty for superannuation theft a single time, despite crooked bosses helping themselves to more than \$5 billion of working people's retirement savings every year.

Testimony provided by the officials from the Australian Taxation Office to the Senate Economics and Employment References Committee in estimates hearings yesterday revealed that the maximum penalty – 200% of the super withheld, has not been levied once since 2013.

Officials also conceded that they routinely allow employers who miss super payment deadlines to escape with no penalty at all. More than three quarters of the 24,634 employers targeted by the ATO for breaking super laws went unpunished.

Quotes attributable to ACTU Assistant Secretary Scott Connolly:

“Superannuation is deferred wages that working people have made sacrifices to receive.

“The fact that up to one in three employers are able to help themselves to our retirement savings without the fear of consequences is a disgrace.

“Working people who've had their retirement savings stolen should have better options than to just report it to the ATO and hope something happens.

“The industrial umpire should be given the power to investigate super theft, deliver justice and punish offenders – the ATO have been given a chance and they have failed.

“And working people's representatives must have the power to inspect the books when they suspect wage and super theft.

“Bosses who are thinking about stealing people's super need every reason to think twice – right now they know they'll probably go unpunished.”

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