

Thursday 22 November 2018

ACTU explores intervention in Rossato case

The ACTU will explore a legal intervention opposing the Industrial Relations Minister Kelly O'Dwyer in a case where the minister hopes to further restrict the rights of workers and exacerbate the insecure work crisis in Australia.

The Minister has asked the federal court to speed up its processes in the Rossato v Workpac case, in which the employer is trying to use a selective example to justify legal loopholes that facilitate the widespread abuse of casual work to cut pay and make jobs less secure.

Australia already has the highest proportion of temporary labour in the OECD and as was shown in a recent ACTU report casual loading is often not paid at all. Workers are being forced into casual work in huge numbers simply to pad the pockets of their employers.

In intervening in the case the Minister used taxpayer funds to back big business against those who are being exploited. She is advocating to keep open a loophole which is being used to pay casuals less than permanent staff, while denying them job security.

Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Sally McManus:

"We will not stand by and allow the Minister to run roughshod over the rights of working people.

"This Minister is complaining that the consequences of ripping off workers is too much for business to bear. She has used the resources of the commonwealth – taxpayer money – to side with big business against working people.

"The Minister has no understanding of what life is like for hundreds of thousands of workers who are forced into casual work against their will.

"The practice of forcing people into casual work to avoid paying leave and other entitlements is systemic and is contributing to a national crisis of insecure work.

"We need more secure jobs in this country, not an employment minister who defends companies that rot the system and create insecure work.

"The Minister should be honest about what she is doing. She is trying to ensure that a rot which is ripping off hundreds of thousands of Australian workers is able to continue.

"We have a national crisis of insecure work in this country and the best the Government can come up with is to side with the big end of town in court cases.

"Kelly O'Dwyer is determined to do everything possible to get the employers over the line in this case. She should be standing up for working people and trying to address the national crisis of insecure work."

ENDS

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