

Wednesday 21 July 2021

Employers want all the control of JobKeeper, with none of the security for workers

A group of employer groups led by ACCI and Ai Group are asking the Federal Government to include the ability to vary the hours and reduce the pay of working people that they were granted under JobKeeper in the new support payment system, while offering workers none of the protections or security that JobKeeper provided.

During JobKeeper, Fair Work Act provisions allowed employers the power to – among other measures – reduce hours, move workers from location to location or request workers take their annual leave. However, JobKeeper also provided workers with the security of knowing that they were still connected to their job and would have something to return to post-lockdown.

If the Morrison Government caves to these demands, it would give power to employers and put workers in a precarious position – offering them none of the safety and security that JobKeeper did.

Working people need jobs, and it is necessary for the rebuilding of the Australian economy to have people in secure employment. Giving these powers to employers without giving working people the security that came with JobKeeper would undermine the recovery and leave millions of workers facing an uncertain future.

Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O’Neil,

“Unions won JobKeeper in 2020 when the pandemic began, and it worked by keeping many workers tied to their places of employment, while also offering businesses a lifeline.

“The premature ending of JobKeeper in March was a big mistake. We knew then that the pandemic wasn’t over, and that the failed vaccine rollout meant lockdowns weren’t either.

“If it weren’t for the Morrison Government’s vaccination rollout failure, the likelihood of ongoing lockdowns would be far lower.

“The Morrison Government has a responsibility to working Australians to not cave to these demands from businesses, and instead to reinstate a revised JobKeeper 2 system that we know will work to protect jobs and support public safety.”

Media contact: Kleo Cruse 0433 021 999