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TPP legislation must be stopped

The peak body for working people has urged MPs to oppose the Trans-Pacific Partnership bill introduced to the lower house of Parliament today.

The legislation to amend the Customs and Tariffs Act brings the deal, which will kill jobs and puts the interests of big business ahead of those of working people, one step closer.

Economic evidence shows Australia could lose tens of thousands of jobs under the TPP, and that the TPP will increase inequality. Any economic benefits would predominantly go to the pockets of big business.

The Turnbull government has signed a deal which allows employers to bring in an unlimited number of temporary workers without having to check if there are local workers available. This adds six countries to an already large list of others, including Korea and China, whom this government has given free labour market access.

These negotiations should be subject to proper scrutiny. They were carried out in secret without genuine public input. The ACTU urges the Turnbull Government to reform the treaty-making process, including a more open process for meaningful public engagement.

The investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) provisions included in the agreement allow big business to sue the Australian Government for changing domestic policy regulations.

The TPP will undermine the ability of government to regulate in the public's interest essential services like health, education, social services, water and energy.

Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O'Neil:

"We should have a trade agenda that puts working people and fairness at its core. But the Turnbull Government has only ever looked after big business in its trade negotiations.

"The TPP is a bad deal that hands more power to big business. It's bad for working people, it's bad for people who rely on affordable medicine, and it's bad for our sovereignty. The only winners are corporations.

"We urge parliament to oppose unfettered corporate greed by voting against this deal, and to adopt a trade agenda that will deliver real benefits for working people."

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