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## Labor Party review reaffirms unions as the “bedrock” of the modern ALP

The 2010 ALP National Review Report has reaffirmed the historic shared mission of the union movement and the Labor Party to create a more prosperous, fairer and more inclusive Australia.

The review has acknowledged that maintaining a modern link with the union movement is vital to Labor governments continuing to improve the lives of working Australians.

The ACTU welcomes the release today of the report of the review headed by Steve Bracks, Bob Carr and John Faulkner.

ACTU Secretary Jeff Lawrence said the review had recognised both the historical role that labour’s industrial and parliamentary wings have played in building a better Australia, but also the ongoing relevance of unions in representing millions of workers.

“It was important following the federal election that a thorough review was conducted of all aspects of the ALP, and that this should not result in a blame game over the 2010 election but consider the broader issues raised by the first term of the Labor government,” Mr Lawrence said.

“Unions and the ACTU will examine the Bracks-Carr-Faulkner review in more detail in coming days, but our initial reaction is positive about the role and relationship of the union movement to Labor. Collectively unions are the largest, most representative democratic group in this country and the voice of working people and their families.

“Unions provide a crucial link between the ALP and working Australians about the issues that matter to workers. In recent years we have jointly got rid of Work Choices and delivered paid parental leave, among other wins.

“This review reaffirms the role of unions in the ALP’s policy and decision-making processes, and recommends that the ALP broaden its dialogue with the union movement and adopt the modern organising methods which have allowed unions to grow their membership in recent years and remain vital organisations focused on their members interests.”

ACTU President Ged Kearney said debate within the wider labour movement was a sign of a healthy, democratic movement.

“Unions first and foremost exist to represent their workers independently and forcefully,” Ms Kearney said. “Of course, unions will not always see eye to eye with Labor, and in recent years as throughout history there have been points of conflict.

“Consequently, it will always be a decision for individual unions and their members how close a relationship they will form with the Labor Party. Some will choose to affiliate, others will not.

“But regardless, unions will stand up for working people, for better wages, better conditions, for a fair share of the nation’s economic output, for equality and for social justice.”

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