

Friday, 27 March 2020

Unions and business waiting for government action on jobs and wages

Statement attributable to ACTU President Michele O’Neil:

The union movement is working with reasonable employers to keep as many people in work as possible.

We are negotiating, where appropriate, for more flexible time, working from home, leave and training options with employers and doing everything we can to keep workers in jobs and ensure their safety.

The union movement has won protections for casuals and two weeks paid special leave with many employers including Boeing, Star Casino, Australia Post and a number of banks and universities. But the reality is that where there is not a union presence workers are being let go.

Unfortunately, our Government is lagging behind the rest of the world and workers are losing out because of it.

In the UK, Denmark, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Germany, Ireland and South Korea, there are already wage subsidies in place which guarantee the jobs of workers. Every day the Morrison Government delays is another day that workers have no certainty and employers are shedding jobs.

One of the few things we know for sure about the outcome of this crisis is that without strong government intervention it will leave huge portions of the population out of work.

A wage subsidy of 80 per cent is needed now to give certainty to workers and employers and keep jobs going for as long as possible.

We cannot afford to wait, the Morrison Government must act immediately.

ENDS

Contact: Peter Green – 0400 764 200 or 03 9664 7266