

Tuesday 26 April 2022

## Labor's Ag Visa commitment a step in the right direction

The ACTU welcomes the Labor Party's commitment to bring the Agriculture Visa under the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility scheme and the improved protections it offers.

More will need to be done, but Labor's plan is in stark contrast to the Morrison Government's 'anything goes' approach, which will see unlimited numbers of vulnerable migrant workers brought in with no mechanisms in place to ensure that they are filling genuine skill shortages or will be protected from exploitation by unscrupulous employers.

The ACTU also welcomes Labor's commitment to 3000 permanent residency places being added to the PALM scheme. In contrast, the Coalition does not offer a pathway to permanent residency for vulnerable migrant workers, which makes them more vulnerable to exploitation.

Labor's commitment to fully implement of all recommendations of the Migrant Workers Taskforce is welcome and unions look forward to the prospect of working with an Albanese Government to improve labour market testing to ensure local workers are given first opportunity for jobs.

### **Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O'Neil:**

"Unions welcome Labor's commitment to ensuring protections for vulnerable migrant workers and local workforces – which is in stark contrast to the Morrison Government's anything goes approach.

"The Morrison's Government's Ag Visa has no mechanisms to properly check if local workers are being given good job opportunities and training to fill genuine skill shortages or to ensure vulnerable migrant workers are being protected against exploitative employers. Labor's alternative approach is a step in the right direction.

"Exploitation of migrant workers is rife across Australia and we need a government that will fight to make our system better, not one like the Morrison Government that will further entrench worker exploitation."

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