

Wednesday 18 May 2022

Morrison is missing on wage rises for one in four workers

The ACTU will continue fighting for a 5.5 per cent wage increase at the Annual Wage Review hearing at the Fair Work Commission today, and will be doing so without the support of the Federal Government.

This increase is essential for boosting the wages of 1 in 4 workers who rely on the Review for wage growth, and would lift the Adult Minimum Wage from \$20.33 to \$21.45 per hour, \$772.60 to \$815.09 per week and \$40,175.20 to \$42,384.84 annually.

Almost a decade of low wage growth and cost of living increases mean that the average Australian worker lost \$800 in real terms last year and are projected to lose another \$4000 in by the end of 2022.

Ensuring that workers affected by the Review do not endure more real pay cuts is essential for small businesses who rely on consumer spending. Workers who depend on the Review spend everything they earn, largely in local businesses. Further real wage cuts will strangle discretionary spending and harm the economy.

The Federal Government, under Scott Morrison, has argued to Fair Work that low paid work is “important” as a “stepping stone”.

Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Sally McManus:

“Minimum wage workers spend every dollar they earn, and avoiding ongoing real pay cuts is essential for ensuring workers keep money flowing into small businesses.

“Scott Morrison is endorsing a pay cut in real terms for 1 in 4 workers at a time when many can hardly afford rent or groceries. While lettuce is reaching \$5, and fuel is creeping back up to \$2 a litre every dollar makes a difference. Mr Morrison won’t even commit to a \$1 per hour pay increase, leaving them in a cost-of-living crisis.

“Instead of supporting Australian workers today, Scott Morrison is no where to be seen.

“Scott Morrison is out of touch, he doesn’t understand that if workers don’t have enough to spend then small businesses lose customers and suffer too.

“Profits are up 13%, sales up over 10%, CEO pay up 24%, it is not acceptable that the only people who do not recover financially from the pandemic are the front line workers who put their health at risk for the whole community.

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