

Tuesday, 13 October 2015

ACTU welcomes the gutting of the Fair Work Amendment Bill

Today the Senate defeated many of the unfair proposals in the Turnbull Government's Fair Work Amendment Bill, rejecting the prospect of more exploitation of the most vulnerable workers in our community.

The Opposition, Greens and Cross Bench Senators successfully challenged and defeated the most unfair elements of the Bill including the return of WorkChoices style individual contracts, the option to sack workers on their holidays and sham restructuring arrangements.

However, the passing of the Greenfields Agreements amendment, presents a special rule for a privileged business in the mining and construction industries that undermines the basic rights of workers to a fair deal. Additionally, the Senate overturned the current rule that has been in place for over 22 years allowing workers to take industrial action as long as they are genuinely trying to reach agreement. Workers are now stripped of their ability to negotiate with companies that simply don't want to deal. The Senate has effectively cut loose those workers affected by these changes.

Quotes attributable to ACTU President Ged Kearney:

"The Bill's proposals focused on punishing workers who want to contribute, be secure in their workplace and earn a fair wage. Today's amendments have challenged this and sent a clear message to government that workers need fairness and respect.

"The ALP, Greens and Crossbenchers have listened to the real needs of workers and kicked out the unfair and pernicious proposals that would have only attacked the most vulnerable in our communities."

Media Contact: Julie-Anne Davies 0418 793 885