

Tuesday, 7 November 2023

Closing Loopholes Bill must pass as families hit with cash rate hike

The ACTU is concerned with the RBA's decision to raise the cash rate today to 4.35%.

The rate rise comes despite inflation easing, economic and jobs growth weakening and Australia facing the highest levels of mortgage stress in the world, according to the IMF.

The ACTU is concerned that this hike is hurting working people and will only add more financial stress on budgets that are at breaking point.

Economic research from organisations including the OECD shows that current price pressures are mostly driven by corporate profits instead of wages. Despite this evidence, the RBA increased the cash rate for the 13th time since May 2022, a decision that will worsen the financial stress of working people who will face even higher mortgage repayments and upward pressure on rents.

The ACTU calls on all politicians to pass the Closing Loopholes Bill as soon as possible to give working people a pay rise to tackle cost-of-living pressures. The bill will ensure labour hire workers are paid at least the rate of their EBA colleagues and criminalise wage theft.

While working families struggle to afford basic goods, the Minerals Council of Australia, representing the most profitable companies in the country, announced in September that they are expecting to spend \$24 million on advertising to stop the Closing Loopholes Bill from passing.

Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O'Neil:

“Working families will be skipping meals, avoiding doctors’ appointments, and using the last of their savings just to afford these higher interest rates.

“Not only are big business announcing record profits and keeping prices artificially high, but they are also spending millions of dollars running a campaign of misinformation so they can keep using loopholes to cut the pay of workers.

“Big business lobbyists are campaigning to stop workers getting a pay rise by opposing the Closing Loopholes Bill. With interest rates increasing and the cost of living so high, cross bench Senators like David Pocock and Jacqui Lambie can make a real difference to working families by standing up to these big corporations and passing the bill in its entirety.

“Our message to Peter Dutton and the Parliament is clear. You can either be on the side of profiteering big businesses, or you can be on the side of workers who desperately need a boost to their incomes.”

ENDS

Media Contact: Gareth Hathway 0499 878 782