

Monday, 6 November 2023

Pass the Closing Loopholes Bill in its entirety to get wages moving

In response to Jacqui Lambie and David Pocock's proposed private senators' bill the ACTU reiterates its call for the "Closing Loopholes" Bill to be passed in its entirety.

The Albanese government's "Closing Loopholes" Bill will introduce many important provisions that will get wages moving.

Wages stopped growing under the ten years of Coalition Government as they let companies use legal loopholes to keep wages low, at a time when workers are really struggling to keep up with the cost of living, these changes are urgent.

This bill will mean labour hire workers cannot be paid less for doing the same job. This will stop businesses from using labour hire just to cut pay.

The bill will criminalise wage theft, addressing wage theft directly assists working families with the cost of living.

ABS statistics show that casual workers are paid less than their permanent counterparts, a delay to the bill traps these casual workers in insecure work for longer. Last week the AHA, Australia's biggest employment group representing casual workers supported the bill.

The Labor Government took these policies to the election 18 months ago, they have a mandate and public support to address the cost of living by ensuring that people can earn a fair wage from a fair day's work.

Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O'Neil:

"Jacqui Lambie and David Pocock are acknowledging the importance of some elements of this bill, but every element is urgent and important, especially during a cost-of-living crisis.

"No worker should be left behind, and splitting the bill leaves behind changes that will make a world of difference to struggling families across Australia right now.

"It's no wonder that big business lobby groups support splitting the bill, they want to do everything possible to avoid giving workers better pay and conditions.

"The companies crying the loudest about these laws are some of Australia's biggest and most profitable companies – Qantas, and big mining companies such as Gina Rinehart's, Hancock Prospecting - all who have had massive profits and are paying huge bonuses to their CEOs.

"Big business is always looking at ways to cut corners, and that is why they are exploiting legal loopholes to keep wages low. Right now, the most important job for politicians should be to get wages moving in the right direction. We urge them to pass the whole of the Closing Loopholes bill.

ENDS

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