

Tuesday 22 November, 2016

Registered Organisations Bill a blow to workers

After over two years of failing to force it through the Senate the Turnbull government late last night secured passage of the Registered Organisations Bill, the little-known piece of legislation attacking workers and their unions that was used as a trigger for this year's double dissolution election.

At a time when we face stagnating wages, increasing job insecurity, and uncertainty about where the jobs of the future will come from the Turnbull government has dedicated the time and resources of the government to attacking working people and their representatives.

It is disappointing that instead of supporting working people's attempts to increase wages and improve working conditions the Turnbull government has instead decided to burden them with a disproportionate and manifestly inappropriate regulatory regime.

The union movement is predominately governed by volunteers. Everyday people who give of their time to help their fellow workers run our movement and the Turnbull government has now chosen to subject them to the same penalties that apply to highly paid corporate boards.

These people are the backbone of the union movement and have done nothing to deserve the demonisation that has been heaped upon them by this government.

Quotes from Dave Oliver, Secretary, ACTU:

"The Registered Organisations Bill is nothing more than an attempt by this government to hobble the union movement with red tape and discourage people from volunteering as delegates and representatives to help their colleagues."

"We have seen similar attempts made in the past that have also failed, just as this will, to diminish the passion and commitment of our hard working delegates and volunteers"

"This law does nothing to address declining wages. It does nothing to create new jobs. It does nothing to secure the employment of the more than 1 million underemployed Australian workers in this country. It does nothing to prepare young people for the rapidly changing nature of work. It just continues an ideological attack on unions driven by Prime Minister Turnbull's rank politics."

"This is yet another demonstration of the Turnbull Government's contempt for working people and the issues that are of concern to them; fair pay, good conditions, workplace safety and proper treatment of all people in the workplace. The people of the union movement work every day on these issues and deserve the support, not the condemnation, of their government."

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