

Thursday, 8 August 2019

Morrison and big business could fix skills shortage

Big business calling on the Morrison Government to fix the current skills shortage ignores the fact that the actions of this Government and some business leaders have caused the shortage, and both groups could take immediate action to end it.

The Morrison Government has cut billions from TAFE and vocational training, while some businesses continue to rot the temporary work visa system, denying jobs and training to local workers and shutting down opportunities for young people, especially in regional areas, to get a trade or pursue higher education.

The Morrison Government must reverse its own massive cuts and increase investment in TAFE and skills training, and big business must invest in apprenticeships and traineeships to open up job opportunities for young people rather than relying on the broken and exploitative temporary visa program.

Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Sally McManus:

“Big business and the Morrison Government are squabbling about who is responsible for the skills shortage while we have crisis level youth unemployment in almost all regional areas. Both groups can act to end it and must do so.

“The Morrison Government has cut billions from TAFE and skills training. These cuts must be reversed if we are ever going to end the skills shortage.

“The Morrison Government’s actions have led directly to businesses exploiting a broken temporary visa system and bringing in entire workforces of vulnerable temporary visa workers rather than training and hiring local workers. These short-sighted policy failings have created an unemployment crisis for young workers, especially in regional areas.

“The temporary visa program currently results in exploitation for many of the workers being brought in, who are systemically underpaid and mistreated.

“Vocational education cuts, and a broken temporary visa system underpinned by wage theft has created this problem. We need action from this government and from business to end this problem.”

Media contact: Peter Green 0400 764 200; ACTU Media: 03 9664 7315