

Thursday, 24 October 2019

Government continues to lock workers out of vocational education

Business Council of Australia Chief Economist and former Liberal party staffer Adam Boyton has been announced as interim National Skills Commissioner by Minister for Skills Michaelia Cash in another example of the Morrison Government handing control of vocational education to big business.

The appointment of a BCA employee and former Liberal staffer to this crucial position comes shortly after Minister Cash declined to include a single representative of working people on the 19-member Industry VET Stakeholder Committee. Prime Minister Scott Morrison has not responded to the ACTU's request that this oversight be addressed.

If Mr Boyton is serious about reforming the vocational education system and building the capacity to educate young Australians for the jobs of the future with input from all relevant stakeholders, he can prove it by including unions in the process and demanding that workers be given a seat at the table.

Quotes attributable to ACTU Assistant Secretary Scott Connolly:

“This is a government that has just been revealed to have underspent on VET by nearly a billion dollars – now they're appointing representatives of big business to critical positions in Vocational Education.

“If Mr Boyton wants to be taken seriously and not be seen as a blatantly partisan appointment he must reverse the decision made by Minister cash to lock working people out of the new stakeholder committee.

“Vocational education needs serious reform if it is going to continue to deliver the skills that Australian workers need. Cutting funding and appointing your mates while locking workers out of the reform process is an indication of the contempt this government has for TAFE and vocational education.”

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