

Monday, 24 February 2020

In face of national crisis, Morrison pardons historical theft of super payments

With daily revelations of wage theft dominating the start of the new parliamentary year, the Morrison Government has today passed a bill which will waive penalties for employers who have stolen superannuation from workers.

The bill protects employers from prosecution by the ATO for any theft of superannuation back to the birth of the system, regardless of the size of the theft or the intent of the employer.

This is an unprecedented move by a federal government – blanket pardoning of a serious contravention of federal law, with no caveats or limits. The Government has said publicly that if employers cannot determine the extent of their theft before the end of the amnesty, it will be extended.

Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O’Neil:

“We are living through a national crisis of wage theft and superannuation forms a significant part of this issue. Instead of punishing the employers who have been stealing money from their employees, potentially for decades, the Morrison Government has waved them through without any penalty whatsoever.

“This law will recover a tiny fraction of the billions in super estimated stolen since the beginning of the system and will do nothing to change behaviour in the business community.

“The Government has had seven years and has done nothing to help workers with unpaid super. Workers need their right to Super included in the National Employment Standards so that repayment can be easily pursued and have super paid at the same time as wages.

“The best way to stop wage and super theft is to allow unions to once again conduct compliance checks in workplaces to end this epidemic of ripping off workers.

“This is a shameful act by a Government which it seems will stop at nothing to cater to employers at the expense of working people.

“The ACTU will continue to explore all available legal avenues to ensure that working people get the money they are owed and that thieves are held accountable for their actions.”

ENDS

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