

Tuesday 8 June 2021

Business groups seek to exploit lockdown to block min wage increase

Business lobby groups, who today have also demanded the Morrison Government renew attacks on workers' rights, have made last minute submissions to the Fair Work Commission exploiting the Victorian lockdown to argue against an increase to the minimum wage to over 2.2 million workers from 1 July.

These lobby groups are using a Melbourne lockdown caused by the failures of the Morrison Government to attempt to block a pay rise for a quarter of the Australian workforce – a pay rise which would support the recovery of Australian businesses by boosting consumer spending.

The companies hiding behind these lobby groups should be held accountable for the arguments they are making on their behalf.

Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Sally McManus:

“The 3.5 per cent increase in the minimum wage which we are arguing for would help millions of Australian workers and their families recover from a once in a hundred-year pandemic and recession, while also helping small and medium businesses which desperately need a boost to domestic spending.

“Instead of supporting a wage rise which would help all businesses, these business lobbies are trying to exploit a local lockdown to pad their members' profit margins.

“The companies that get these groups to attack worker's pay on their behalf should be held accountable. People deserve to know if they are doing business with companies that don't think minimum wage workers deserve a pay rise.

“Business lobby groups have fallen in line with businesses like Harvey Norman which have seen huge profits through the pandemic but are still seeking to cut pay for workers.

“These groups represent some of the companies which profited most during the pandemic. Now these businesses – like Harvey Norman – are using these lobby groups to try and cut workers' wages.”

Media contact: Peter Green 0400 764 200