

Tuesday 5 May

## Temporary visa program front for slave labour

Australian Unions have long said the temporary visa program is broken and facilitates the gross exploitation of migrant workers, a view confirmed by the ABC *Four Corners* program aired last night.

Urgent action must be taken by the Federal Government to clamp down and regulate the entire temporary visa and labour hire system and remove rogue operators.

The Senate Inquiry into temporary work visas called for by Australian Unions, is essential and must be given the full backing, support and resources of the Federal Government to comprehensively investigate these appalling matters.

There should be an immediate halt to any expansion of the temporary work visa program until the full outcome of the Senate Inquiry is known.

The National Union of Workers played a significant role in bringing this story to light because no worker should be subject to such inhumane, degrading and appalling conditions.

Anyone would be appalled and ashamed to know that this sort of conduct is occurring in Australia.

### **Quotes attributable to ACTU President Ged Kearney:**

“Unscrupulous employers are trying to get around Australia’s workplace laws by using the temporary visa system to underpay vulnerable employees.

“This is the worst kind of intimidation, bullying and harassment against people who are unable to speak up or get help and are living under the threat of deportation or further harassment.

“The Senate Inquiry must examine these shocking reports of bullying, intimidation and harassment.

“We will not stand by while slave labour like conditions are being endured by vulnerable workers in Australia.

“The Abbott Government’s tinkering at the edges won’t fix this broken system.

“It is unbelievable that the Abbott Government is seeking to expand and further deregulate the temporary visa system despite allegations of exploitation having been aired for some time.”

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