

Tue 14 November 2023

Australians want action on workplace changes, despite business lobby campaign

The Australian public are more supportive of changes to workplace laws than they were in July, and want Government to act to stop wage theft, close labour hire loopholes, regulate the gig economy, increase the minimum wage and improve rights for casual workers.

ACTU today has released polling by Essential Research showing very strong support for the Federal Government on the key elements of the Closing the Loopholes legislation, despite millions of dollars of advertising by the big business lobby.

In a stark warning to big business, the amount to people who now believe business has too much power has grown from 59% to 64% from July last year.

The research was conducted in Queensland, Western Australia, and Tasmania from the 18th to the 27th of October.

There is stronger support on key issues:

- 80% agree on measures that protect workers from wage theft (up from 73% in July)
- 65% agree that employees and labor hire workers should be paid the same if they are doing the same jobs (up from 56% in July)

The poll also shows respondents believe that the Government should act to help workers:

- 80% believe the Government should act to better protect workers from wage theft (up from 70% in July)
- 68% want the Government to try to increase wages for workers in general (up from 60%)
- 65% want the Government to changes workplace laws to close labour hire loopholes (up from 56%)
- 62% want the Government to regulate the gig economy (up from 51%)
- 52% want the Government to change workplace laws to enable unions to negotiate higher wages (up from 47%)

Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Sally McManus:

“The Australian public understand that this legislation delivers better rights for workers which deliver better wages during the cost-of-living crisis.

Big business has spent tens of millions of dollars to influence politicians not to pass changes that are widely supported by the public.

This research shows that Australians don't trust big business and they see through the lies they have been peddling simply to protect their profits.

Australians voted for Labor Government to get wages moving and deliver fairer workplaces.

Peter Dutton and the Coalition are opposing assistance for working families. They are on the side of big business and will not support legislation that helps working people to get better wages and have better, safer workplaces.

Big business will do and say anything to delay or stop these laws. Every day of delay saves them money and costs working people. Working Australians need support now and this should be the priority of all politicians”.

ENDS

Media Contact: Gareth Hathway 0499 878 782