

Tuesday 28 September 2023

## Early Christmas present for millions as a significant parts of the Closing Loopholes Bill passes

The ACTU welcomes the passing of significant parts of the Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Closing Loopholes) Bill 2023

Key parts of the Bill that passed today were:

- Closing the labour hire loophole, which will mean better pay for labour hire workers who are brought in by companies like BHP and Qantas to drive down wages in their industries.
- Criminalising wage theft- for too long workers have had wages stolen from them with little recourse. This Bill will increase the civil penalties for wage theft and criminalise intentional wage theft. Superannuation theft will also be included in this legislation.
- Stronger rights for workplace delegates.
- Introduce better support for first responders diagnosed with PTSD.
- Strengthen protections against discrimination for employees subjected to family and domestic violence.
- Include silica-related diseases and safety within the Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency
- Criminalise industrial manslaughter.

In November the ACTU release polling conducted by *Essential Research* showing 80% of those polled agreed that some changes or significant changes were needed to our workplace laws to get wages moving.

### Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Sally McManus:

“This is a welcome Christmas present for working people thanks to the Albanese’s Government, the cross bench, David Pocock, Jaqui Lambie, Lidia Thorpe and the Greens.

“The Australian public understand that this legislation delivers better rights for workers which deliver better wages during the cost-of-living crisis. These changes will make work a safer place to be, as well as give workers a pay boost at a time where they really need it.

The companies that will be crying loudest about these changes are some of Australia’s biggest and most profitable. Mining companies such as Gina Rinehart’s or Qantas, who’s CEOs are receiving huge bonuses, they don’t feel the hardships many Australians are feeling right now. They can well afford these changes, but they fought against them as they don’t want to see their mega profits take the smallest of hits. A small hit for them, a massive difference for working Australians.

The fight isn’t over however, the rest of the Bill must pass in the new year, we won’t leave truckies, casual workers and gig workers behind. The job is unfinished until that happens”.