



7-Eleven Stores Pty. Ltd.  
ABN 48 005 299 427

National Office  
2/658 Church Street, Richmond, Victoria 3121

Telephone  
(03) 9541 0711

19 July 2021

Senator Raff Ciccone  
Chair  
Senate Select Committee on Temporary Migration  
[temporarymigration.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:temporarymigration.sen@aph.gov.au)

Dear Chair

I appeared at the Senate Select Committee on Temporary Migration on 30 June 2021. During my appearance at the hearing I undertook to take a question on notice.

### Question

*CHAIR: Assuming the government does eliminate the cap altogether, what measures should be put in place to ensure that the international student visa program doesn't become an unregulated labour program?*

### Response

Counterintuitively, the existing policy setting on restricting student visa holders to 40 hours per fortnight is currently leading to an unregulated labour program.

As the joint UNSW/UTS report by Laurie Berg and Bassina Farbenblum titled 'Wage Theft in Silence' (2018) found that students who worked more than 20 hours per week (potentially breaching their visa conditions) earned substantially lower wages than other students. "Two thirds (64%) of international students reported that they worked between 9 and 20 hours each week, and a further 13% worked 21 hours or more."

This 13% of international students are working in the 'black economy' which by definition is unregulated.

Alternatively, if students are liberated from this arbitrary time ceiling, they could openly work in the regulated labour market with all the benefits and protections that it offers.

The real test should be on the primacy of their visa which is education. If a student can satisfactorily meet their course requirements, then they will progress with their studies. If they do not, then they are at risk of breaching their visa and conditions and having it revoked.

In short, both regarding study and work, international students should be treated no differently to other students.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with this further information.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature]