

Queensland



Council of Unions

Honorary President: **Rohan Webb** General Secretary: **Ros McLennan** Assistant General Secretary: **Michael Clifford**

25 October 2017

Senate Education & Employment Legislation Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

By email: eec.sen@aph.gov.au

RE: Fair Work Laws Amendment (Proper use of Worker Benefits) Bill.

The Queensland Council of Unions (QCU) is the peak union council in Queensland, working with unions that represent over 360,000 workers across the state.

The QCU has had the opportunity to view the ACTU submission in relation to this Bill.

The QCU supports and endorses the ACTU submission that opposes this Bill.

The ridiculously short time frame for submissions in relation to the *Fair Work Laws Amendment (Proper use of Worker Benefits) Bill* cannot go without notice. It is evident that the government has no intention in consulting relevant stakeholders on the content or implications of the Bill.

We will be urging cross-bench Senators to vote against the Bill as it is a clear attempt at ambush on the part of the government. There is no justification for the undue haste associated with the inquiry into the Bill.

The content of the Bill represents a complete overreach in terms of interference in the business of trade unions. As has been noted in several other inquiries, Australian trade unions are already heavily regulated and any further regulation places undue risk on the effective operation of unions.

Furthermore, the Bill potentially jeopardises a range of entitlements that have been created for workers through enterprise bargaining.

As is noted in the ACTU submission, the Bill could impact upon gains that have been made in training and training facilities, income protection insurance, welfare support and portable entitlements. Such entitlements have provided benefits to Australian workers over several decades.

As with much of the anti-union legislation introduced into parliament by the Abbott and Turnbull Governments, this Bill is disproportionate. The grounds upon which the Bill is based are spurious and it has the intent of creating difficulties for workers and unions with no apparent reason.

We oppose strongly oppose the Bill.

Please contact Research and Policy Officer John Martin at
relation to this matter.

for any further advice in

Yours Sincerely

Michael Clifford
Assistant General Secretary
Queensland Council of Unions