



GetUp submission to the Economic Recovery Package (JobMaker Hiring Credit) Amendment Bill 2020 [Provisions]

23 October 2020

About GetUp

By combining the power of one million members, movement partners and a central team of expert strategists, we work to have extraordinary impact on the issues that matter.

GetUp members come from every walk of life, coming together around a shared belief in fairness, compassion and courage. It is GetUp members who set our movement's agenda on the issues they care about, in the areas of Environmental Justice, Human Rights, First Nations Justice, Economic Fairness and Democratic Integrity. Our work is driven by our shared values, not party politics.

GetUp is an independent, not for profit community campaigning organisation, incorporated as a company limited by guarantee. GetUp receives no political party or government funding, and every campaign we run is entirely supported by voluntary donations.

GetUp's purpose is set out in our constitution – to advance progressive public policy in Australia. We do this by empowering everyday people to have their say.

GetUp is also guided by a Statement of Independence, which defines us as an active values-led participant in our politics, independent from the control, direction or influence of political parties and politicians.

Our Statement of Independence is here:

<https://www.getup.org.au/about/getup-statement-of-independence>



23 October 2020

Senate Standing Committees on Economics
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Re: Economic Recovery Package (JobMaker Hiring Credit) Amendment Bill 2020

We welcome the opportunity to make a submission to the Senate Standing Committees on Economics regarding JobMaker Hiring Credits. We have serious concerns about this Bill – and note the following objections:

1. No protections against exploitation

In its current form, there are no protections against the exploitation of workers hired under this scheme – particularly as these jobs will be for younger workers who are already at risk of exploitation. There is no guarantee that employers who engage in wage theft, unfair sackings, and workplace abuse will be excluded.

2. No guarantee for further employment

The Bill only provides hiring credits for one year, and is likely to be used mostly by workplaces that hire in short-term bursts and are able to discontinue staff after the period of hiring credits is over. Not only will this likely put hundreds of thousands of young workers back into unemployment – and potentially poverty, if the Government's proposal to cut income support continues – but it will also debilitate those worker's training and skills development through the churn and burn cycle of the hiring credits.

3. No opportunities for older workers

One of the most egregious features of the Bill is that it excludes anyone over the age of 35. Not only will this give workers over the age of 35 a substantial disadvantage in the labour market, it will also penalise workers over the age of 35 currently working – as employers could become incentivised to sack older workers sooner. With older people – particularly older women – being the fastest growing group of unemployed people living in poverty, this is unacceptable.

4. No support for growth in essential industries

The Bill incorporates zero strategy for essential industry growth. The catch-all nature of the Bill is unstrategic, simply trying to create a short-term boost in employment statistics rather than genuine and secure employment. Instead, the government could strategically expand public sector work in the sustainable manufacturing sector, the renewable energy sector,



and the care sector – the industries we know are necessary for a good recovery out of this crisis.

5. No public consultation in the legislative process

Despite the large impact this will have on unemployed people and society more generally, this Bill has been rushed through with little thought. Instead of public consultations with affected communities and organisations, the process was short, ill-conceived, and kept out of reach from everyday people. With millions of people needing support into employment, and the ramifications of this Bill likely to continue for the entirety of this crisis and beyond, we are calling for a public committee hearing and stakeholders invited to participate.

6. It's just more public handouts to private corporations

As a flagship policy in the October 2020 Budget, the Bill was a missed opportunity to invest public resources into public goods and services. Instead, the Bill is another example of the government “privatising the recovery” – handing money to private corporations instead of directly hiring people into the public sector with good, secure jobs.

Sincerely,



Edward Miller
Campaigns Director, Economic Fairness