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John Hawkins

Att Mr John Hawkings

below is a letter I sent to Josephine Bunny asking her to forward my concerns to Barry Hasse the Federal member for Kalgoorlie to express concerns on my and my colleagues behalf as to the immediate impact this change on such short notice and in the current economic crisis will bring to me and others who are have planned their future commitments on their current available net income..

As I have explained below without any forewarning of impending changes to the Tax System or a period in which to make adjustments to our financial commitments we are being severely punished and our future financial plans at risk because we have chosen to stand on our own two feet in a free market and and in often hostile and unhealthy working conditions and locations to bring in extra income to our families and the economy of Australia . This is not Fair and Equitable and at the very least Un-Australian in the spirit of a Fair Go

As we are not an organised group of workers and have to rely on own skills and industry demand to stay employed we have not been able to have a united approach or any input to any available hearings in such a short period of time available to us.

I only hope that you can put forward our point of view to the Senate and ask them to look further into the implications and the effect it will have on the future of the Expatriate Workers in the Oil/Gas and Mining Industries and the loss of opportunities for future Australians nationals in international employment before they agree to these proposed changes.

At the very least give us a suitable and fair time frame to make the necessary adjustments to our financial commitments in a time of economic instability so as not to leave us unable to meet those commitments and bankrupt.

Thankyou

Best Regards  
Jason Palmblad  
Senior Toolpusher  
Drillship Seadrill West Hercules  
China

Dear Ms Bunney

I read with some interest your reply to one of my colleagues ( Rory Denniss ) in which he asked for your help in getting the assistance of Barry Hasse in his position as the Federal member for Kalgoorlie and representing the interests of the Energy and Resources sector ( of which we play an important role on the world stage ) to convince the other members that to change the status quo in regard to our Tax exemptions as Australian residents inline with the regulations currently set out in Tax ruling 23AG is not in the best interest of not only ourselves personally but also to the economy of Australia as a whole.

I don't think that the people who have instigated and pushed for change in this regard fully understand the implications and the chain of events they will set in motion.

Currently Australia is well represented in the Expatriate workforces of the Oil & Gas and mining industries across every part of the globe... This is not something that happened overnight and has been the accumulative result of 3 generations of people leaving their homes and country and being willing and able to work under any conditions for the required amounts of time to complete the tasks that they have undertaken, and in doing so have advanced themselves and like-minded people they have known along the way to positions in these workforces where they have been able to actively source and employ other ( inexperienced ) Australian nationals into the Expatriate workforce and give them the opportunity for advancement that otherwise may not have been available. I personally myself have been able to offer and assist other Australian nationals in getting a kickstart to their International careers and they in turn have actively been doing the same.

These jobs have always been as much about **who you know** even more than what you know and if the Expats working out there now feel that it is no longer worth the effort then those contacts will be lost for future employment as the Australians leave the Expat communities and other nationalities that are waiting on the fringe such as Sth Africans and Croations fill the voids that are left behind and proceed to do what we have done in the past which is to give and push preference for their own countrymen within the industry.

Although we enjoy the job that we do, we are not leaving the comforts and safety of working offshore or in the mines of Australia because we feel the need to work in dangerous and disease affected regions of the world or spend hours flying in aircraft that you promise yourself if it doesn't get off the ground on this attempt down the runway, you will get off and tell the company to stick their job, or try flying in PNG or Burma in a light plane in violent weather.. or while the family is sitting down for Xmas dinner or numerous other family occasions your not able to be there, it is for one reason only and that is to be able to advance ourselves and our families welfare and living conditions by the extra money we bring home.

For someone to calculate that by changing our tax exemption status that suddenly a major contribution will be experienced in the coffers of the treasury is simplistic in it's outlook. As we have a lot of guest workers in Australia currently working in our Industry and they are already paying tax it seems counter-productive to set up a situation whereas we will be looking to return to Australia to work.. The end result is the Treasury gets the same amount of Tax and the economy misses out on the money coming into the country that was being brought in by the Expatriate workers.

This Ruling will result in immediate changes within the domestic workforces as those Expat's with a wealth of Experience look to return home to work and those with lesser experience who might otherwise have been employed will not be and neither will they have the experience or contacts to fill the International positions recently vacated by the returning Expats.

I would have thought that all priorities within the slowdown on the world economies would have been geared towards job creations and creating opportunities for Australians.

On a personal level the sudden drastic change ( within 2 months ) will leave me exposed financially as I own an accomodation business in Esperance ( West Australia ) in which I borrowed a considerable amount of money off the bank based on expectations of my earnings and available cash to be able to satisfy those loans and build the business up over the next few years to be able to make me financially independant in my approaching retirement years..

I certainly won't be able to meet the committments to the Bank and build up the business if I have to make payments to the Tax Office... If I had known this 2 years ago I would never have committed myself to this endeavour.

I certainly don't think this new ruling will come under the heading of Fair & Equitable  
At the very least I will have to sell the business in a shrinking market and will probably sell my house in Esperance and move back to Perth.. so as to be available to fly in/fly out to the North West

This Industry is not the type that most people can continue past 60 years of age as it is very demanding on the body and mind.

Everyday I start work could be my last if I make the wrong decision, whether directly related to a financial cost to the company I work for, or the company we contract to, so the stress levels are always running high, as you can no doubt appreciate that we don't have the protection and stability afforded to us if we were working in Australia under Australian industrial laws. We work in an Industry that is highly efficient and works on the strength of supply and demand and we have to be able to make the most of these moments when demand is greater than supply.

I'm sure I could go on further about this but I am hoping by now that you may see that there is definitely going to be some disadvantageous changes brought about by changing the ruling of this Tax Law for expats and is going to have both an immediate & detrimental financial effect for me and my colleagues and also for the possibly have a far reaching effect on future employment for Australians in the International workforce.

I hope you can persuade Barry Hasse and other members to take a closer look at this Bill and it's wider and far reaching implications

Thankyou  
Best Regards  
Jason Palmblad  
Senior Toolpusher  
Drillship Seadrill West Hercules.  
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