

The Federal Government wants to take away many of your basic rights at work



“ Taking away our rights at work
will benefit business at the expense
of working families ”

Important changes coming from 1 July 2005

From 1 July 2005 the Federal Government will take control of the Senate, giving it a majority in both houses of Federal Parliament.

For the first time since he became Prime Minister, John Howard's Government will be able to pass whatever laws it likes without checks or balances. This will continue until at least the next federal election in 2007.

One of the first things that the Howard Government has said it will do with its new Senate powers is take away many of your basic rights at work.

Big business is lobbying the Government to change workplace laws and throw out fairness at work.

Big Business

“Regulatory excess in the name of fairness is misconceived.”

Michael Chaney, Business Council of Australia Financial Review, 16 February 2005

The Howard Government

“An emphasis on fairness only leads to regulatory excess and inefficiency”

Kevin Andrews, Minister for Workplace Relations, Speech, 25 February 2005

This pack contains information about the Government's plans to:

1. Remove employment conditions from awards
2. Change the way minimum wages are set to make them lower
3. Use individual contracts to undercut existing rights and conditions
4. Keep unions out of workplaces and reduce workers' negotiating and bargaining rights
5. Abolish redundancy pay and protection from unfair dismissal for 3 million people who work in small businesses
6. Reduce the powers of the independent Industrial Relations Commission to settle disputes and set fair minimum standards at work

How will these changes affect you?

If you or a member of your family or household work, or want to work in the future, then the Howard Government's plans to take away basic rights at work will affect you.

The Howard Government's plans would benefit business at the expense of working people.

Australian families can't afford to go backwards, at a time when many are just keeping their heads above water.

your rights at work

worth fighting for

Your rights at work - worth fighting for

Unions have always stood for decent rights and fairness in the workplace. The changes the Government is proposing will hurt working families.

Unions oppose the Government's changes and will campaign for:

- **A strong safety net of decent minimum wages and conditions**
- **Proper rights for Australian workers to reject individual contracts and bargain collectively for decent pay and conditions in collective agreements**
- **The right to join a union and to be represented by a union**
- **A strong, independent Industrial Relations Commission to settle disputes and ensure fair minimum wages and conditions**

These things are vital to protect Australian living standards, families and the Australian way of life.

How you can help the union campaign

Your rights at work are worth fighting for. Unions oppose the Howard Government's changes because they will hurt working families.

Unions across Australia will be campaigning in the workplace, the community and if necessary the next election to protect Australian living standards, families and the Australian way of life.

What you can do to support the union campaign

- **Tell your work colleagues, family and friends about the Federal Government's plans or give them a copy of this information pack.**
- **Be active through your union - strong unions are the best way to protect your rights at work.**
- **Ask your employer to sign a Rights at Work Charter, and respect your rights at work.**
- **Join the ACTU's national week of union and community action 27 June to 1 July.**
- **Let your local Liberal or National Party MP know that you oppose the Government's plans to take away basic rights at work.**

You can also contact your union or State Trades and Labour Council, or call the ACTU Hotline.

Access all your Rights at Work campaign materials, petitions and information at

www.rightsatwork.com.au

ACTU Hotline on 1300 362 223