

MEDIA RELEASE

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Is Bill Shorten intending to deliver the ACTU its wish list of reforms?

AMMA – Australia's Resource Industry Employer Group

FOLLOWING the Opposition Leader's cryptic response to new ACTU Secretary Sally McManus's controversial comments, Australia's resource employers are calling on Bill Shorten to clarify which 'bad' workplace relations laws he intends to change if made Prime Minister.

Ms McManus yesterday outlined the union movement's 'wish list' of changes, intending to damage the economy and take Australia's workplace relations system back to the 1970's, including:

- Ability for unions to take strike action at any time, over any issue;
- Having the Fair Work Commission, a tribunal headed by an ex-union boss, arbitrate disputes;
- Reducing the bargaining power of employers;
- Restricting employers from hiring part-time, casual or contract employees;
- Preventing the Fair Work Commission from terminating expired, uncommercial enterprise agreements.

In response to Ms McManus supporting law-breaking by unionists in pursuit of these goals, Mr Shorten said he "believes in changing bad laws, not breaking them".

"Ms McManus's comments are terribly timed given last week, militant unionists led by the CFMEU illegally walked off worksites around the country, sucking millions out of the national economy," AMMA chief executive, Steve Knott, said.

"It is extraordinary for the new ACTU leader to suggest the current workplace laws are 'unjust' given we are still operating under the legislation co-written by Julia Gillard and Bill Shorten at the behest of the union movement. These are Labor's workplace laws, smothered in the fingerprints of the ACTU.

"Does our alternate Prime Minister support a scenario where unions can strike at any time, over any issue? Does he support providing the Fair Work Commission, a body he helped set up and placed an ex-ACTU boss at its head, with arbitration powers over disputes?"

"The current legislation already provides unions with the legal ability to strike when enterprise agreements expire. It provides unions generous powers to enter worksites, to run union membership campaigns in employee lunchrooms, and to insert themselves into agreement-making despite having a minority of employee support.

"Resource employers are deeply concerned with what the Opposition Leader's real workplace relations agenda might be. If he indeed does intend to 'run Australia like a trade union', Mr Shorten must clarify his position on key workplace relations issues and rule out supporting the damaging, regressive notions put forward by the ACTU's new secretary."

AMMA is campaigning for 'Five Urgent Reforms' to restore balance to Australia's workplace relations system. Visit our [campaign page](#) and watch our animated video on union workplace entry laws.

MEDIA CONTACT: Tom Reid via Tom.Reid@amma.org.au or 0419 153 407
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