



## PORTER PLEDGES 'THIS IS NOT THE END OF INTEGRITY BILL'

# Hanson blindside kills anti-thug law

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The government has pledged to revive its union-busting bill after Pauline Hanson handed the Coalition an embarrassing Senate defeat that business branded a "win for union thuggery".

Attorney-General Christian Porter called on Senator Hanson to explain why One Nation sided with Labor and the Greens to oppose the Ensuring Integrity Bill, leaving the Senate vote tied at 34 votes, meaning it was lost.

But with one week of Senate sittings left this year, the government signalled on Thursday night that it would wait until next year to try again to get the bill passed.

The eruption of the Westpac scandal undermined the government's bid to get the bill passed, with Senator Hanson saying voters had told her the govern-

ment had "one rule for white-collar crime and much harsher rules for blue-collar crime".

Union leaders hailed the defeat of the bill, which was also opposed by Jacqui Lambie, despite her previous pledge to back it if CFMEU Victorian leader John Setka did not resign

Mr Porter, who had believed

One Nation would back the bill after he agreed to its proposed amendments, said the government was committed to the proposed laws and would reintroduce them at a date to be determined.

"It's for Pauline Hanson to explain why she voted against a bill that met every requirement she sought through extensive consultation," Mr Porter said.

He added that he was disappointed at the bill's defeat.

"This is important reform which seeks to ensure that registered organisations obey the law," he said. "It is as simple as that. We remain committed to this reform and will be seeking to reintroduce the bill at an appropriate time."

Senator Hanson said she and fellow One Nation senator Malcolm Roberts voted against the bill because it provided "unfettered powers" to administrators if they were appointed over registered organisations, including unions.

"Under no circumstance was I going to unleash their unlimited power and zero accountability on Australian unions or other regis-

tered organisations," the One Nation leader said.

Industry groups, which had believed the bill would pass, hit out at One Nation and Senator

Lambie for voting with Labor and the Greens. The Centre Alliance backed the bill.

Australian Industry Group chief executive Innes Willox urged the government to reintroduce the bill without delay, saying the Senate result was a "disappointing win for union thuggery" that would embolden the Construction Forestry Maritime Mining and Energy Union.

"The CFMEU's conduct displays blatant contempt for the laws already passed by parliament," Mr Willox said.

"No organisation can be allowed to adopt a business model of law-breaking and to treat the fines imposed by courts as just the cost of doing business."

Master Builders Australia chief executive Denita Wawn

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# Coalition pledge to revive bill despite defeat

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said the bill's rejection was a "bitter blow for the building and construction industry".

"The thousands of small builders and tradies that are victims of construction union bullying will be gutted by this," Ms Wawn said.

"They deserve an explanation from those senators that rejected the bill about why they voted to let the bullies win.

"The action of these senators will give the green light to construction unions and their officials to continue to bully, harass and coerce small-business people to sign up to union deals and it's our members and the community that will pay the price."

Australian Mines and Metals Association chief executive Steve Knott said that, contrary to the Labor Party's "misrepresentations", the bill would have promoted compliance with workplace laws and "acted as a deterrent to the recidivist law-breaking of a minority group of union officials".

Senator Hanson said that recent weeks had seen "rampant white-collar crime exposed, involving tens of millions of breaches by Westpac, with no effort from the bank or this government to deal with their illegal actions".

"This week we also saw the Registered Organisations Commission called into question by the Federal Court over what appears to be an illegal raid on the Australian Workers Union," Senator Hanson said. "When you're asking unions to act in accordance with the law, you need government departments to lead by example."

She said her opposition to the bill "won't be guaranteed next time" and she urged unions to stop engaging in bullying on building sites.

"Let this be a warning shot across the bows to all union bosses to get their act together and a second shot across government

bows to clean up the white-collar crime," Senator Hanson said.

Anthony Albanese said the defeat of the "disgraceful union-bashing legislation" was a win for workers, the very people the bill was designed to hurt.

Labor's industrial relations spokesman, Tony Burke, said the government should now abandon the proposed laws.

"These were extreme laws that would have given the government unprecedented powers, unparalleled anywhere in the developed world, to sack union officials and shut down entire unions for minor breaches," Mr Burke said.

"The government arrogantly believed they had this vote in the bag but the Senate has delivered them a humiliating rejection.

"This was a week in which Scott Morrison sought to impose standards on unions that he

refused to impose on banks or members of his own cabinet."

ACTU secretary Sally McManus said the Senate had busted the government's "anti-union, anti-worker attack".

"Members from unions all over the country campaigned to stop this law," Ms McManus said.

"Workers from all walks of life made the case to the Senate cross-bench about why the bill was bad for workers, jobs, wages and Australia.

"Without your efforts and the efforts of hundreds of thousands of working people across Australia, a

law designed to hurt the rights of working people would now be law. Working people have stood up against an attack on democratic rights and won."

NSW Labor senator Tony Sheldon, who was a secretary of the Transport Workers Union before entering parliament, said: "Christian Porter tried to knee-cap unions so that this government could go after our award system and our unfair dismissal laws.

"But make no mistake: they will never give up on taking away the rights of people to organise. The fight has just begun."



Jacqui Lambie and One Nation leader Pauline Hanson before the vote on the Ensuring Integrity Bill in the Senate on Thursday