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## Resource employers welcome Senate Crossbench support for temporary workplace changes

Australian Resources and Energy Group AMMA commends the Senate Crossbench for working with the Morrison Government to assist employers in making fast, temporary changes to workplace arrangements in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Government in April made a temporary change to the Fair Work Act, reducing the minimum consultation required for variations to enterprise agreements from seven days to one day until June 2020.

Today, the Senate Crossbench including One Nation voted with the Government to defeat a motion from the Federal Opposition to disallow the temporary change.

Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations, Christian Porter, has also announced that any changes made to enterprise agreements under the reduced consultation period would only be in effect for a period of up to 12 months.

“Temporarily allowing employers and employees to fast-track changes to their workplace arrangements is a sensible policy response to the extraordinary challenges being faced by businesses during this pandemic,” Steve Knott, AMMA Chief Executive said.

“Mandating that employers consult over any changes for at least seven days is obviously not a practical position to take in the COVID-19 business environment.

“In AMMA’s experience, if a change to working hours or conditions takes longer than 24 hours to explain to employees, it is probably too complicated anyway and unlikely to gain majority support of the workforce.

“We are disappointed the Federal Opposition couldn’t see the clear merit in this temporary change to enterprise agreement variation processes. The common sense shown by One Nation and the Senate Crossbench to support this temporary measure is welcome.

“While to date only nine applications have been made taking advantage of this measure, it may make all the difference for some businesses scrambling to get through to the other side of this crisis.”

Mr Knott said AMMA’s members in the national resources and energy industry – which directly and indirectly support more than one million jobs – also support the Attorney General placing a 12-month effective period for any COVID-19 related agreement variations.

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Brad Thompson, 0409 781 580

