



# **MEDIA RELEASE**

**The Hon. Bruce Billson MP**

Federal Member for Dunkley  
Shadow Minister for Small Business, Deregulation,  
Competition Policy and Sustainable Cities

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## **PROPER ANALYSIS NOT PROPAGANDA NEEDED ON NEW WORKPLACE REGIME SMALL BUSINESS IMPACT**

The Rudd Labor Government's new workplace regime that commenced on January 1 continues to be a mystery for small businesses faced with implementing the changes.

The mystery is set to continue as the Government fails to respond positively to the Opposition's calls for an urgent grass-roots education and information campaign for small business employers and employees. It is also clear that Julia Gillard aims to keep the impact of the changes a mystery to the Australian public.

The Opposition calls on the Government to publicly release credible economic modelling on the changes and to commit to a comprehensive and objective small business cost-benefit and impact analysis of the new workplace regime.

With these changes the Government is making it harder and more costly for small business to employ people and is failing to provide information and support to assist small business employees and employers to meet new obligations and requirements.

Reports continue to emerge of how wage costs will be pushed up meaning jobs will be lost, working and trading hours will be reduced, services will decrease and small business will hurt under the Rudd Labor Government's new workplace regime.

Stakeholder and industry feedback continues to confirm earlier survey results from the Australian Retailers Association (ARA) that the Rudd Labor Government's new workplace regime will force nearly two-thirds of small retailers to decrease employment levels, four out of five to restructure their workforce and many to consider closing their doors.

Instead of addressing the serious concerns, cost and compliance worries of small business, Julia Gillard does a media stunt at a major multi-national and highly unionised business and spruiks propaganda about claimed benefits from the new regime based on a survey of just 30 contacts sourced from her Department.

Access Economics acknowledges that 30 responses 'is (just) sufficient to be a statistically valid representation' (p. 9). Only 4 respondents had less than 15 employees and 'the average respondent employed 923 people (headcount, not full time equivalents').

The claimed benefits are not based on the Rudd Labor Government's actual new regime, which Western Australia refuses to join, but the administrative effort involved with a generic national workplace relations system for the private sector.

During my consultations with leading small business industry representatives here in WA, it is clear that Western Australia will not be persuaded to refer its IR powers to the Commonwealth by dubious Rudd Government propaganda about claimed administrative benefits.

Small business impacts are clearly not a Rudd Labor Government priority, yet the small business community is reporting significant costs and disadvantages from the Government's new workplace regime.

Only with the Government committing to an independent and public assessment of the impact of the new workplace regime will it be clear whether the Rudd Labor Government has delivered its 'no disadvantage' commitment or broken another new workplace regime promise on the back of the promised information and education campaign it has failed to deliver.

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