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**SENATOR THE HON ERIC ABETZ**

*Leader of the Opposition in the Senate  
Shadow Minister for Employment & Workplace Relations  
Liberal Senator for Tasmania*

**THE HON BRUCE BILLSON MP**

*Shadow Minister for Small Business, Competition Policy and Consumer Affairs  
Federal Member for Dunkley*

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**Coalition reaffirms its support for independent contractors and self-employed**

The Coalition has today reaffirmed its support for the 2 million Australians who depend on independent contracting and self-employment for their livelihoods and condemned Labor's continued assault on legitimate contracting and self-employed arrangements.

The Coalition will not change the current laws relating to the treatment of personal service income and will resist the current government's attack on contractors and the self-employed.

Shadow Minister for Small Business, Bruce Billson said "a successful campaign before the last election spearheaded by the Coalition forced the Gillard government to abandon implementing punishing tax law changes but the government and unions have changed tack".

"The Fair Work Ombudsman, Australian Tax Office and Australian Building and Construction Commissioner have all already been tasked to target independent contractors and self employed people to force many into union-controlled workplace arrangements", Mr Billson said.

"The recent federal budget has also added onerous new reporting and red-tape requirements for independent contractors in the construction sector", Mr Billson said.

Shadow Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Senator Eric Abetz said "Independent contractors and the self-employed are under siege from the Gillard-union alliance; having bureaucrats trawling through every document will be the last straw for many".

"Labor knows it is easier for unions to sign up members in big workplaces, so making it impossible for independent contractors to operate is their plan", Senator Abetz said.

Senator Abetz said "Labor's war against independent contractors is part of a union agenda to expand union control and influence in the workplace and a purely ideologically driven campaign".

Independent contractors and self-employed people work hard and provide a valuable contribution to the economy and in the workplace, and deserve to be supported and not the innocent targets of a Labor-union campaign, according to Mr Billson and Senator Abetz.

Media contact:

Vincent Sheehy (Mr Billson)  
David Allender (Senator Abetz)

0417 236 109  
0457 590 881