



THE HON BRUCE BILLSON MP

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

MEDIA RELEASE

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Small business concerned with regulatory costs of OH&S harmonisation

The case for a Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman has been underlined with the prospect changes to Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) regulation may adversely affect the small business sector.

Small business already hit with possible cost increases that will flow from the Gillard Labor government's carbon dioxide tax plan, may also face additional costs due to harmonisation of OH&S laws.

Despite what the Gillard government would have you believe, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) warned harmonisation of the laws could suffocate business in red tape.

The Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman, a Coalition small business election commitment, would provide small business a voice by acting as a policy activist within government, empowered to make sure that their concerns are registered and understood across all levels of government and bureaucracy.

Small businesses in particular will be hit hardest, having to wade through 580 pages of regulation without having the luxury of an army of OH&S experts to help guide them through the process.

Time spent working through pages of government red tape is time employers spend away from running their small business.

This is another case of small business not having an advocate in government when regulatory decisions are made that affect the day to day operations of their business.

It is important the needs of small business are heard and the sector is not burdened with additional unnecessary red tape. Small business should not be saddled with needless red tape due to changes to OH&S laws.

Media Contact: Vincent Sheehy 0417 236 109