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President Gerardine (Ged) Kearney
Secretary Jeff Lawrence

The Committee Secretary
Senate Education, Employment & Workplace Relations Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Wednesday, January 11, 2012

Dear Senators,

Fair Work Amendment (Textile, Clothing and Footwear Industry) Bill 2011

Our organisation is the peak national body representing trade unions. We welcome and support the Fair Work Amendment (Textile Clothing and Footwear Industry Bill 2011('the Bill')).

We have had the benefit of viewing the submission prepared by our affiliate the Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union of Australia, prior to it being formally lodged with the Committee. We unreservedly concur with and support the comments made in that submission.

The Bill is consistent with the government's recognition of the particular vulnerabilities of the workforce in the textile, clothing and footwear sector including outworkers, be they sham 'contractors' or acknowledged as employees. Further, the Bill is responsive to investigation and enforcement barriers that have arisen in the implementation of existing provisions and provides a sensible underpayment recover mechanism which will encourage responsible risk management, compliance and ethical practices throughout the supply chain. These legislative provisions are to be complemented by a Code of Practice to ensure the objects of the Bill, particularly those contained in the proposed Part 6-4A are realised.

We see the Bill as very positive development in improving compliance and standards in this sector and are committed to working closely with our affiliates, government and the Fair Work Ombudsman to ensure its successful implementation.

Yours faithfully,

Trevor Clarke
Legal & Industrial Officer
Australian Council of Trade Unions