



Working Women's Centre SA Inc.

22 December 2011

Committee Secretary
Senate Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Committees
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam

Working Women's Centre SA Inc welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Fair Work Amendment (Textile Clothing and Footwear Industry) Bill 2011.

In general we support the objectives and provisions of this Bill. As a State based non-government organisation we have worked actively to protect the rights of TCF outworkers since 1979. We are pleased that this Bill will go a long way to implementing an effective, nationally consistent protection of TCF outworkers, who are without question amongst the most vulnerable, isolated and exploited group of workers.

We are most concerned that strong provisions for right of entry be reflected in this Bill, given the conditions that many sewing outworkers operate in and their reluctance to speak up for themselves for fear of losing out on ongoing work.

We also stress the importance of ensuring that all arrangements that sewing outworkers operate under are captured by the deeming provisions. The level of 'sham contracting' in this industry has been a concern to our Centre and continues to be a concern and we would not want to see this Bill providing any less protection than our current State Code ensures.

Finally, we draw the Committee's attention to the disempowered situation of many TCF outworkers and stress the importance of simple and workable provisions and procedures for workers to recover underpayments.

Yours sincerely

Sandra Dann
Director