

Submission

to

Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education
Legislation Committee

Inquiry into the Workplace Relations Amendment (WorkChoices) Bill 2005

Submission no: 9

Received: 31/10/2005

Submitter: Mr Jeff Petersen

Organisation:

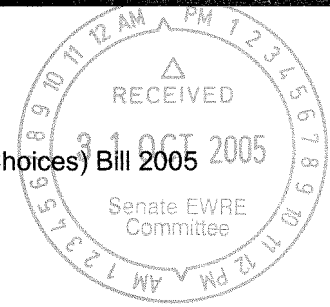
Address:

Phone:

Fax:

Email: Jeffrey.petersen@team.telstra.com

From: Petersen, Jeff W [Jeffrey.Petersen@team.telstra.com]
Sent: Monday, 31 October 2005 2:57 PM
To: EET, Committee (SEN)
Cc: Jeff (Home)
Subject: Inquiry into the Workplace Relations Amendment (WorkChoices) Bill 2005



Senators:

I like to make this submission to the inquiry into the Workplace Relations Amendment (WorkChoices) Bill 2005.

Firstly, the 'No disadvantage' test will be abolished for both new AWAs and new awards. This means that workers can be offered lowered conditions and wages and be expected to take it or leave it. By reducing the wages and conditions of new employees particularly, we risk the creation of a working poor in this country, with all the social disharmony that goes along with it. It does not reflect the egalitarian nature of Australia's society to reduced the real wages of the poorest in our community while the very rich are claiming pay rises of 20% pa and want the top marginal tax rate reduced as well. If the job is not worth paying a living wage, then perhaps we should not be doing the job in the first place.

Secondly, unions are the only means of redressing the inequality in the bargaining position between an employer and an employee. Free right of access must be allowed for union representatives to employees, be they on award or AWA. Also, the US system of union coverage of workplaces, if a majority of workers agree, would be a good addition to the bill to provide further choice in the negotiation process. I have been offered an AWA three times myself and have knocked it back each time after carefully looking at the 'small print' and finding that these agreements were neither individual or could be negotiated in any sense. Thus in my current 'award employee' status I would demand that my union undertake direct negotiations on my behalf, just as a company would be able to bring in outside negotiators on its behalf to negotiate.

I hope my views are of some help.

Regards,
Jeff Petersen