

# Submission

to

Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education  
Legislation Committee

## **Inquiry into the Workplace Relations Amendment (WorkChoices) Bill 2005**

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**Submission no:** 199

**Received:** 15/11/2005

**Submitter:** Mr Bernard Griffin  
Chair

**Organisation:** Hunter Labor Regional Assembly

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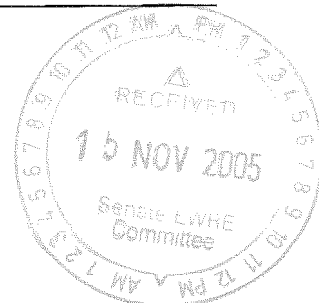
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# HUNTER LABOR REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

**Bernard Griffin**  
Chair  
**Tim Crakanthorp**  
Deputy Chair

15 November 2005



Mr J Carter  
Committee Secretary  
Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education Legislation Committee  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Carter

Please find attached a number of resolutions endorsed at the recent Hunter Labor Regional Assembly.

I regret the delay in forwarding these to the Committee but would ask that they be considered by way of submission into the Committee's current enquiry into the *Workplace Relations Amendment (Work Choices) Bill 2005*.

Your assistance in this matter would be appreciated.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Bernard Griffin'.

BERNARD GRIFFIN  
Chair

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## RESOLUTIONS FROM THE HUNTER LABOR REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

29 October 2005

The Hunter Labor Regional Assembly calls for the maintenance of the independent Industrial Relations Commission to decide award wage rates, which must be fair and enforceable and maintained at a relevant level. We do not want a USA-styled system, which sets minimum wages at \$US5.15 per hour, forcing working people below the poverty line.

We further call for the award system to be strengthened to guarantee minimum standards, including:

- wage rates based on skills levels
- limits on when workers are required to work
- overtime pay
- weekend or night work rates
- work related allowances
- annual leave loading
- redundancy pay

The Hunter Labor Regional Assembly affirm the right of workers to join unions to defend the strong system of Awards and minimum conditions fought for by workers over the past 150 years. Current employees employed on Federal Awards are encouraged to transfer to State Awards where possible and practicable.

As one of the wealthiest nations, this Regional Assembly maintains the poorest of Australians should in their employment share in that wealth.

This Regional Assembly supports the State Government in its opposition to this proposed legislation.

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That the Hunter Labor Regional Assembly calls for the protection and retention of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission in its present form as an independent watchdog and arbitrator to avoid the erosion of the incomes of all Australians.

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The Hunter Labor Regional Assembly calls for the retention of union involvement in workplace relations and negotiations to assist those who are inexperienced in wage bargaining and to be a watchdog on issues of safety and fairness in workplace practices.

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The Hunter Labor Regional Assembly calls for a committee to be formed to assess and implement access areas to the younger workers and students to advise on workplace relations and the necessity of collective bargaining through such things as websites and student forums. This committee would be funded by the State and National branches of the ALP and by the union movement.

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The Hunter Labor Regional Assembly continues to support the inclusion of minimum living wages, basic wages and margins to be a mandatory component of all industrial agreements.