



United Retail Federation

Serving Members Australia Wide™

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Workers Worse Off Under Rudd Government's IR Laws

Driscoll – “The Government must progress from the Stone Age thinking that will affect small business and cost jobs”

Thursday, May 6, 2010

The **United Retail Federation**, a peak national industry body representing the retail sector, in a submission made to the Australian Industrial Relations Commission warns that the new legislation would “strip away work entitlements for employees and severely affect small business”.

Scott Driscoll, National President of the *United Retail Federation*, said the submission outlines the inflexibility of the proposed legislation and calls on the Rudd Government to better protect small business and their employees. Specifically referring to the disqualification of employees working less than 3 hours and the effects on regional small business, Mr Driscoll said the minimum hours of engagement limited to 3 hours is “completely unfair and will strip work rights away from the most vulnerable”.

“Many vulnerable employees including young people and prospective employees returning to the workforce use the retail industry as their first choice when beginning or reclaiming their careers. The ability to work after school, on the weekday and on the weekends provides the flexibility to continue to study, work around family commitments and gain valuable experience in the workplace. These are about to be stripped away,” Mr Driscoll said.

“Many existing and prospective employees who want to be employed on a casual basis will be disqualified from the employment pool because they can’t always commit to a minimum three hour shift.

“This is another broken promise from the Rudd Government and is in complete contradiction to what the Minister claimed previously, that modern awards are not intended to increase costs for employers or disadvantage employees. The proposal to change the hours of minimum daily engagement for the most vulnerable workers will have a detrimental impact on the employee, the employer and the entire retail sector.”

For further comment contact Scott Driscoll on 0413 831 045.