



United Retail Federation

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MEDIA RELEASE

Rudd Government IR Back Down: Ombudsman Shows No Faith in IR Laws

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Peak national industry body, the **United Retail Federation**, has slammed the Rudd Government's approach to its new IR laws and labelled it a "shambolic, incompetent and dodgy process". The comments follow a recommendation by the Fair Work Ombudsman to postpone the compliance audit process of the legislation on tens of thousands of small businesses due to the uncertainty, confusion and complexity of the legislation.

Scott Driscoll, National President of the **United Retail Federation**, said he has previously called for greater certainty and clarity around the legislation during recent meetings with representatives of the Fair Work Ombudsman and the recent back down is now an admission that the Rudd Government's IR laws have been inadequately communicated, are overly complex and antiquated in their nature.

Mr Driscoll also said the Rudd Government IR agenda had been "written, spoken and authorised in the ivory towers of the ACTU and Labor unions" and the back flip would be welcomed if it genuinely represented an understanding that the laws were fundamentally flawed. Mr Driscoll feared it was "simply a stay of execution for small business subjected to this debacle".

"The Rudd Government is no longer interested in award modernisation and they are now putting their antiquated and inflexible union dictated IR agenda on the back burner until after the election campaign," Mr Driscoll said.

"Whilst we would welcome this latest back down by the Rudd Government on its archaic IR legislation we can only assume it's a stay of execution at this point. You would have to suspect there has been political interference with the Ombudsman in this process.

"It's more the product of political panic in the Rudd Government than any reasonable policy assessment. If the Rudd Government returns to power the executions of small business will proceed.

"The Rudd Government knows all too well that this inflexible and job destroying IR legislation is electoral poison in every community across this country with its spectacular back down on the compliance audit implementation process.

"It appears this stay of execution will only last as long as is politically convenient for the Rudd Government. It also highlights the unfortunate lack of understanding when it comes to small business in Australia and what they go through each and every day," Mr Driscoll said.

For further comment call Scott Driscoll on 0413 831 045.
Editor's Note: Scott Driscoll will be available for comment at Parliament House in Canberra.