



NEWS RELEASE

Sharon Bird MP
Federal Member for Cunningham

New IR laws restore fairness and balance

New industrial relations laws proposed by the Rudd Government will restore fairness and balance to Australian workplaces, Federal Member for Cunningham, Sharon Bird, has told the House of Representatives.

Ms Bird was speaking on the Government's Workplace Relations Amendment (Transition to Forward with Fairness) Bill 2008.

She told the House of Representatives that the design of the Bill involved consultation with employer organisations, trade unions and other levels of government.

"This Bill clearly rejects the completely partisan way the Howard Government dealt with industrial relations and the introduction of Work Choices", Ms Bird said.

She said that the most important provision was the abolition of Australian Workplace Agreements (AWAs) from the date of commencement of the new Bill.

Ms Bird said AWAs had been used to strip workers of wages and conditions under the Howard Government's Work Choices legislation.

"Analysis provided to the Government by the Workplace Authority – analysis the previous government denied existed – reveals that, of 1,748 samples of AWAs, 89% removed at least one so-called protected award condition...75% of them did not provide for a guaranteed wage increase during the life of the AWA", she said.

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