

**MEDIA RELEASE**

## Catholic Religious Australia Urges Government to Revise Fair Work Amendment Bill in Latest Submission

Catholic Religious Australia (CRA) has urged the government to consider revisions to the *Fair Work Amendment (Supporting Australia's Jobs and Economic Recovery) Bill 2020* (the Bill) in a submission pointing out elements of the proposed Bill which leave certain workers vulnerable, compromising workers' rights and the common good of the Australian society.

In the submission, CRA calls upon the government to work collaboratively with business, not-for-profit organisations such as CRA, unions and the broad Australian community to ensure that the nation's industrial relations system supports the full employment of Australians, while rewarding employers who provide secure employment.

CRA recognises that the global COVID-19 pandemic has posed an immense national economic and societal challenge, and it has exposed and exacerbated pre-existing weaknesses in the Australian economy. One such weakness is the increasing casualisation of the workforce, which will only further escalate if the proposed changes remain in the Bill, leaving many Australians in an unstable financial position, resulting in greater vulnerability to exploitation, and violating human rights.

CRA President, Peter Carroll FMS said "The increasing vulnerability, instability and stress caused by the casualisation of workers impacts on individuals but also on society as a whole. It's detrimental to the quality of family life and impacts mental health. It reduces consumer confidence, spending and borrowing because of the lack of security in work and income, which in turn affects the economy."

Furthermore, CRA argues that there is no reason to suspend the 'Better Off Overall Test' (BOOT) which protects those who are most vulnerable to exploitation under Enterprise Agreements. Other concerns relate to the high bar to a successful criminal prosecution for wage theft and the broad reach of the flexible work directions to the detriment of workers.

Anne Walker, CRA National Executive Director said, "Safe, secure, and fulfilling work is a right to which each person is entitled, allowing them to earn a reasonable living, support family, contribute to and participate in Australian society, forge relationships, express their skills and talents and securely enjoy leisure time."

"Legislation should never reduce the function of work to a simple economic contract between employer and employee, or have the sole purpose of increasing capital," she added.

"Any initiatives to rebuild the Australian economy following the global pandemic, any future economic shock and more generally, should always respect and enhance the human rights and the dignity of all Australians, allowing for their full participation in our society".

---

MEDIA ENQUIRIES: Sylvia MacRitchie-Hook | E: [comms@catholicreligious.org.au](mailto:comms@catholicreligious.org.au) | M: 0410 644 356