

yourrightsatwork
worth fighting for

Your Rights at Work the campaign continues...

Well before last year's stunning election victory, we made two promises to those Australians who joined us in the Your Rights at Work campaign.

We said we would not stand back and allow our children and grandchildren to inherit fewer rights at work than us, fewer rights than those fought for and won by our parents and grandparents.

And to guarantee this, we said we would build a community-based movement for change.

Our campaign teams and union members played a huge role in shaping the conversations in our communities against WorkChoices. We galvanised the public debate and mobilised volunteers on a scale not seen before in Australia's political history.

Congratulations to everyone for what we have achieved so far. But our goal of achieving a fair and balanced industrial relations system is still some way off. We need to re-activate the Your Rights at Work campaign so we can finish the job we started.



ACTU President
Sharan Burrow



ACTU Secretary
Jeff Lawrence

ELECTION FACTS



5000 election day volunteers

On election day the Your Rights at Work campaign had nearly 5000 volunteers working at polling booths in Coalition marginal seats right around the country — by far the biggest presence of any group or political party.

39,000 voters door-knocked

Our marginal seat coordinators and community campaigners door-knocked and spoke to 39,000 people about voting to protect their rights at work.

Prime Minister loses his seat

For only the second time in history a Prime Minister lost his seat in Parliament. In both cases the Prime Minister of the day had attacked the workplace rights of Australians.

8 out of 10 said no to WorkChoices

Australians overwhelmingly rejected WorkChoices. A union exit poll found 8 out of 10 people who voted Labor said this was a key priority. And almost 9 out of 10 voters said the Liberals' attack on unions either made them more likely to vote Labor or made no difference to their vote.

The Your Rights at Work swing

The national swing against the Howard Government was 5.4% — one of the biggest swings against a Government in Australia's history. In the marginal seats targeted by our campaign, the swing away from the Coalition was up to 3.0% higher than the average.

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Our campaign goals



At last year's election the Australian people voted overwhelmingly to reject WorkChoices and to restore the rights of working Australians.

Unions are determined to carry on the Your Rights at Work campaign to ensure the voices of the Australian workers and their families continue to be heard. We will campaign for laws that provide:

1. No AWA individual contracts

The former Liberal Government's AWA individual contracts have cut the pay and conditions of thousands of workers. Australian voters have sent a clear message that there should be no new AWAs.

2. Right to union membership and representation

Every worker should have the right to join and be collectively represented by a union, to access advice and information from their union in the workplace and to have a say about decisions that affect their work.

3. Collective bargaining rights

All workers should have the democratic right to collectively bargain on all matters if a majority of the workers in their workplace want to.

4. Protection from unfair dismissal

Job security and protection from being unfairly dismissed are important rights that all Australian workers deserve.

5. A strong safety net

Australian workers must have a decent and comprehensive safety net. There should be a combination of legal minimum standards and a modern and easy to understand award system to provide a floor of dignity for all workers in Australia.

6. An independent umpire

A genuinely independent workplace umpire should be established to resolve disputes.

STOP PRESS



Workers continue to be hurt by WorkChoices

Since the election thousands more Australian workers have continued to be hurt by WorkChoices.

While the Coalition's unfair laws remain in place there are still employers that are using them to cut workers' pay and conditions, to dismiss people unfairly and to deny workers the right to bargain collectively.

Many employers are still using WorkChoices to push workers onto unfair AWAs. One recent case involves 170 workers at a well-known airport valet parking service who were sacked and then offered their jobs back on an AWA that cut their pay by up to \$300 a week.

DID YOU KNOW...

New figures released by the Government confirm that hundreds of thousands of Australian workers lost pay and conditions under WorkChoices AWAs:
70% lost shift work loadings
68% lost annual leave loadings and
65% lost penalty rates.

This is an insult to the Australian people who voted overwhelmingly to reject WorkChoices at last year's election.

We must continue the Your Rights at Work campaign if we are to stop WorkChoices hurting more working Australians.

The first of the Labor Government's new laws to ban new AWAs and begin dismantling WorkChoices (called the Transition Bill) has already been held up in the Parliament by the Liberals and Nationals.

Other laws to be introduced later this year to abolish WorkChoices, re-introduce protections for workers from unfair dismissal and give workers the right to bargain collectively could also be held up, changed or blocked by the Liberals, Nationals and other Senators.

We must hold to account any politician who still supports WorkChoices and opposes decent rights for workers.

It is essential that we continue the Your Rights at Work Campaign and ensure the Rudd Labor Government delivers on its promise of implementing fair and balanced IR laws.

Coalition holds on to AWAs

Patricia Karvelas
Sid Marris

THE Coalition has decided to continue supporting John Howard's Australian Workplace Agreements, despite his Liberal successor, Brendan

tract that must not pay less than a relevant award or enterprise agreement — should become permanent.

"The Coalition re-

Bishop seeks help in saving AWAs

Jennifer Hewett
National affairs correspondent

JULIE Bishop is expected to ask the Opposition front bench today to back her plan to get the

ills, give us your Work Choices stuff and we can get on with it." She had not formally asked the Government to do this, she said. "I will do after I have spoken to shadow cabinet members. We

IMPORTANT DATES

February 2008

- Labor Govt proposes 'Transition Law' to ban AWAs and restore safety net of awards and minimum legal standards. Liberals use Senate numbers to defend AWAs and delay changes
- Two-year award modernisation process begins
- Ten new national legal employment standards released for public discussion

July 2008

- Newly-elected Senators start their term and balance of power in Parliament changes

August – September 2008

- Labor Govt to introduce in Parliament main set of new laws to restore unfair dismissal protections, establish right of workers to collectively bargain and set up a new independent umpire
- Liberals, Nationals and other Senators expected to oppose Labor's IR changes

Your Rights at Work the campaign continues...

The Your Rights at Work campaign could not have happened without the dedication of people like you.

But we cannot allow the arrogance of a few politicians and big business bosses to ignore the will of the Australian people who voted for workplace rights.

We need to continue the campaign to restore workers' rights, to build stronger unions and to achieve a better society in which all Australians share in a fairer, more sustainable and prosperous future.

WHAT CAN YOU DO...

Tell your local MP or Senator how important your rights at work are. Ask the Government members to keep you informed of their progress and when the Liberals try to block fair workplace laws in the Senate, make sure they are reminded that the Australian people voted for rights at work.

Get involved in union campaigns and public events around important issues for Australian workers and their families such as paid maternity leave and superannuation.

Make sure employers who exploit workers are kept in check. Contact the Union Hotline on **1300 362 223** if you know someone being forced on to an AWA or being hurt by the legacy of the former Liberal Government's laws.

Be active through your union – strong unions are the best way to protect your rights at work and improve your wages and conditions. If you are not already a union member call the Unions Australia hotline on **1300 4 UNION (1300 486 466)**.

Sign up to Email updates – Join nearly 200,000 supporters on the Rights at Work website www.rightsatwork.com.au/joinin

