



## **IEU to voice concerns of education workers at Jobs & Skills Summit We need an economy based on well-paid and secure jobs**

The IEU welcomes the opportunity to participate in the [Jobs and Skills Summit](#) being held at Parliament House this week. These discussions have never been more important - real wages are falling at a time when IEU members are working longer and harder than ever.

Australian unions, including the IEU, will be at the Jobs Summit giving voice to the concerns of union members from across the country - we need urgent repairs to broken workplace laws that have been stacked against employees for decades.

### **We need to modernise and re-balance bargaining laws**

No workplace law has more impact on more IEU members than collective bargaining. Every year the IEU negotiates hundreds of agreements covering tens of thousands of employees.

Stalled bargaining negotiations, delayed wage increases and outdated conditions are inextricably linked to the current staff shortages crippling schools and early childhood education; however, the improvements needed to attract and keep teachers in the classroom rest in large part on their ability to fairly bargain for better wages and measures to tackle workload.

It's essential that the Jobs Summit prioritises the repair of bargaining laws, so that employees stand a fair chance within a system that must be **simple, fair and accessible**.

- **A strong umpire to enforce genuine bargaining:** Employers are gaming the system by refusing to bargain, or if dragged to negotiations, threatening take it or leave it offers. They can delay negotiations for years or force repeated ballots of inferior agreements on staff. The Fair Work Commission must be able to intervene in protracted disputes to ensure good faith bargaining and arbitrate if needed.
- **Sector bargaining to provide a simpler and fairer option:** Members working across multiple workplaces, such as hundreds of early childhood centres, should be able to bargain together without sacrificing their workplace rights. Both staff and employers are weighed down by the current restrictions and should be free to choose this common-sense multi-employer solution.
- **The right of employees to take a stand:** The current laws are designed to shut down any attempt by union members to take a stand on critical workplace issues. Even minor work bans are met with onerous ballots, court proceedings and costly legal hurdles. While at the same time, employers can impose punitive unpaid lockouts on their staff. These one-sided restrictions must end.

### **Secure jobs must become the standard in all workplaces**

Thousands of school employees are stuck on a cycle of rolling fixed-term contracts for no good reason. These short-term contracts undermine job security and hurt our school communities.

Long-serving education professionals should be able to transition to permanency rather than being forced onto yet another insecure contract.