



## **Federal IR changes must be passed to deliver much needed support to IEU members with caring responsibilities**

IEU members with family or caring responsibilities struggle daily to balance their work and home commitments. The previous LNP government's workplace laws provided little practical support for members seeking changes to their hours or other flexible options to help support their family.

The denial of flexible work options is contributing to teacher burnout. Teachers are being forced out of the profession when they can no longer juggle their responsibilities.

Members with young children, members caring for an elderly parent or seeking a transition to retirement. No matter the merits, employers routinely reject flexible work requests out of hand.

**The Labor government's *Secure Jobs, Fair Pay Bill* will deliver vital support to these members.**

Access to a period of staggered hours or a move from full-time to temporary part-time can make the world of difference to members drowning in their efforts to balance work and home.

The government's proposals would provide much needed help to members and their families:

### **1. Members would finally have a transparent process and enforceable rights**

As it currently stands, employers can reject flexible work requests on 'reasonable business grounds'. Under the *Fair Work Act* there is no ability to challenge or appeal the decision.

The Bill would simply require employers to genuinely try to reach agreement at the local level, including having discussions with the employee and consider alternative arrangements if the request can't be accommodated. This is a reasonable and sensible change.

### **2. A stronger role for the independent umpire**

The government plan would also enable the Fair Work Commission (FWC) to help resolve disputes regarding flexible work. This could include mandatory arbitration if an employer continues to refuse or ignore an employee request.

### **3. Broader definition of who may need to access flexible work**

The Bill also expands the right to seek flexible work arrangements where an employee, or a member of their family, experiences domestic violence. This change, combined with the government's prior commitment to 10 days paid domestic violence leave, will save lives.

We know that big business and some hostile employer groups will fight any changes designed to give employees a greater say within a more open and transparent process.

The IEU will be reminding all political parties that these changes are essential to restore some balance and fairness to our workplaces.

Australian workers and their families need these laws changed now.