



23 November 2006

**Legislative Council  
Standing Committee on Social Issues**

**REPORT ON THE IMPACT OF THE  
COMMONWEALTH WORKCHOICES LEGISLATION**

The Chair of the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues, Jan Burnswoods MLC, today tabled the Committee's report on the impact of the WorkChoices legislation.

WorkChoices incorporates two fundamental changes to industrial relations in this country.

First, it has dramatically extended the coverage of the federal industrial relations system, including in New South Wales, where it is estimated that the federal system will cover approximately 75% of employees.

Second, WorkChoices has significantly changed the operation of the federal industrial relations system, including removing the award safety net and replacing it with the Australian Fair Pay and Conditions Standard, abolishing the 'no disadvantage' test and exempting businesses with up to 100 employees from unfair dismissal laws.

The Federal Government introduced the WorkChoices legislation with the stated aims of improving productivity, increasing wages, reducing unemployment, improving living standards and enhancing the balance between work and family life.

However, commenting on these claims, the Chair, Jan Burnswoods MLC said, "The majority of the Committee rejects the WorkChoices legislation and the so-called vision behind it. Contrary to the claims of the Federal Government, the Committee believes that WorkChoices will exploit the most vulnerable in our community, leading to low pay work in a low productivity economy. It will exacerbate the skills shortage in Australia and lead to a reduction in workplace safety."

Accordingly, the principal recommendation of the report is for the repeal of the WorkChoices legislation. Failing that, the Committee makes recommendations for the NSW Government to take action to ameliorate where it can some of the impacts of WorkChoices on the people of NSW.

The report, which includes nine recommendations, is available on the Committee's web page at [www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/socialissues](http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/socialissues).

For further comment please contact Jan Burnswoods MLC, Committee Chair, on 9230 2970 or the Committee secretariat on 02 9230 3078.