



**Minister for Commerce
Minister for Finance
Minister for Industrial Relations
Minister for Ageing
Minister for Disability Services
Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council**

15 November 2006

Protections for young workers rushed through Parliament

NSW Minister for Industrial Relations, John Della Bosca, has announced that a package of new laws to protect young people and injured workers from Work Choices was rushed through the Legislative Assembly last night.

Mr Della Bosca said considering the High Court's decision yesterday to uphold Work Choices, it was vital for the lemma Government's workplace protections to be put in place as soon as possible.

"The new laws will be fast-tracked through the Legislative Council today (15 November)," Mr Della Bosca said.

"We are the only party to stand up to the Howard Government's unfair laws and Peter Debnam's plans to transfer one million workers in NSW to Work Choices.

"Mr Debnam supports Work Choices and is committed to handing over all NSW families to the Commonwealth if elected next year.

"That means all NSW workers stand to have their conditions and entitlements, such as weekend, overtime and holiday penalty rates stripped away by Mr Debnam.

"The lemma Government is the only thing standing between Mr Debnam's damaging plan and the one million workers in this State who benefit from the fair and balanced NSW system.

"Despite the High Court ruling, the lemma Government still has powers to draft child labour laws to protect young workers under 18 years of age.

"More than 150,000 young people in employment across the State will benefit from our new laws which will ensure wages and conditions are maintained at least at the level provided by NSW awards and legislation.

"Young workers will not have to bargain individually to maintain their existing penalties, allowances, training pay and training leave.

"They will also be protected from unfair dismissal.

Mr Della Bosca said workers caught under Work Choices who suffer an injury would be protected through changes to workers compensation laws.

"To ensure the NSW laws which protect injured workers are not overridden by Work Choices and are extended to all workers in the State, they are being transferred to NSW workers compensation legislation.

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"These protections are fundamental to the rehabilitation of injured workers. The sooner an injured worker is reintroduced into the workplace, the better the prospect of a complete recovery," the Minister said

"The lemma Government will redouble its efforts to protect NSW families from Work Choices.

"We will continue to ensure Australian values such as the fair go principle are upheld in this State.

"As well as the new young and injured worker laws, the NSW Government has already put in place legislation to protect front line public servants like nurses, TAFE teachers and ambulance officers," Mr Della Bosca added.

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