



## Mark Baker and the Howard Govt want more Devonport workers on wage cutting AWAs

**Media Alert - ACTU Secretary Jeff Lawrence to meet with local woman, Allison Adkins.**

**When and where: 11:00am, Thursday 7 November at HACSU Offices, 80 Oldaker St.**

Local Liberal MP Mark Baker and the Howard Government are planning to put another 1.5 million workers onto AWA individual contracts across Australia, including over 10,000 local workers, if they are re-elected on November 24.

Mr Baker has voted 23 times to support the Howard Government's extreme workplace laws and is now running a mile from it.

ACTU Secretary Jeff Lawrence will be meeting with a local worker, Allison Adkins, who refused to sign an AWA and sought assistance from her union. Allison was then sacked for what the company claimed to be 'operational reasons'.

The directions hearing for Ms Adkins case for unlawful dismissal against her former employer Video City was held this week in the Federal Magistrates Court in Melbourne.

**ACTU Secretary Jeff Lawrence said:** "Local working people need to be aware of the risks of re-electing local Liberal MP Mark Baker and the Howard-Liberal Government.

"It is simple. If the Liberal Party are re-elected they will go further and put in place even more extreme workplace laws which could effect an extra 10,000 or more local workers.

"The case of Allison Adkins is another example of what occurs under the Howard Government's extreme workplace laws. She was forced to sign an AWA and when she didn't, because the government has taken away unfair dismissal rights, she was sacked.

"The 'WorkChoices' legislation acted as a green light to employers to treat their employees badly and to bully them into accepting unfair individual contracts. Ms Adkins stood up and refused to be bullied, the result ... she was sacked. All working people deserve better than that.

"If this can happen to long-term permanent workers with no performance issues, it can happen to any worker.

"The fact is this could happen on an even greater scale, across Devonport and the rest of Australia if they are re-elected", said Mr Lawrence.

The Howard Government is already talking about going further after the election, including:

- Pushing another 1.5 million workers onto AWAs, which could mean over 10,000 local workers.
- Scrapping unfair dismissal protections for all workers, abolishing all awards and the independent umpire, the Industrial Relations Commission.
- Scrapping the 38 hour week and overtime pay.
- Scrapping the so-called 'fairness test' and introducing a US style minimum wage.

"Local working people just cannot risk re-electing local Liberal MP, Mark Baker and the Howard Government. It's important to think of what kind of working life we want for our kids and grandkids." said Mr Lawrence.

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