



TRANSCRIPT

HOWARD APPLAUDS LABOR'S FAIRNESS TEST BACK-FLIP

ACCI Chief Executive Peter Hendy on ABC News - Government IR Changes - 29 May 2007.

Prime Minister John Howard has ridiculed Labor for changing its position on the Government's latest industrial relations legislation.

The Labor Caucus today voted to support legislation to establish a fairness test for workers on AWAs paid less than \$75,000.

Labor had previously criticised the test and Mr Howard says the change of tune is welcome.

"We've had three weeks of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition saying it was a phoney, it was a fake fairness test," he said.

"We had her last night saying 'Oh there might be one person or half a person who gets some benefit out of it', but we go along to the caucus meeting today and say we're going to support it. Well, that's good."

Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) president, Sharan Burrow, says workers will understand Labor's decision.

"What Labor tactically do in this parliamentary debate is irrelevant to the bigger picture, the bigger picture is that you can't put a bandaid on WorkChoices," Ms Burrow said.

Meanwhile the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry says the new fairness test is unnecessary, but it has welcomed the prospect of extra staff to handle the checks.

The chamber's chief executive, Peter Hendy, says the new system will have to be monitored.

"It definitely does mean more red tape for business," he said.

"At least the Government seems to have also announced overnight they're going to put some more resources in so that you can process this new test much quicker than would have otherwise been the case, so that's welcome in itself."