



Sharon Grierson MP
Federal Member for Newcastle

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NEWCASTLE REJECTS HOWARD'S IR AGENDA

"The recent NCC resolution on council contracts, voted for by Labor and Greens Councillors, as well as Independent Lord Mayor John Tate, is a reasonable expression of our community's desire to see fairness in its workplaces," Sharon Grierson said today.

"Media statements against Newcastle City Council's position by Tourism Minister Fran Bailey and Howard's IR trouble shooter, Andrew Robb, show just how out of touch they are with working people and their communities."

"Newcastle's productivity and prosperity has always been based on good relations between employers and workers with unions playing a positive and important role. This is how we've built the largest coal exporting port in Australia. This is how we've expanded our knowledge-based engineering and aerospace industries. This is how we've established world-leading service industries and successful innovations in tourism and hospitality."

"NCC's motion reinforces this proud tradition, and shows how communities are looking to protect themselves against the Federal Government's regressive industrial relations regime."

"Under the Howard Government's industrial relations changes it will be every man for himself."

"That's not how we do things in Newcastle."

"The right of workers to negotiate a collective agreement is fundamental to stability and productivity in our workplaces. Once that right is taken away, workers and workplaces become isolated and vulnerable, and family life suffers as we work harder and longer for lower pay with fewer conditions."

"And that affects not just the production of goods and services, but the entire well-being of the community of Newcastle."

"I admire the NCC for standing by the community of Newcastle, and support the important principles put forward in their motion. The majority of Newcastle businesses, which have sound industrial relations practices, will have nothing to fear from such an approach."

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