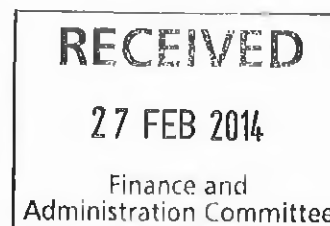




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27 February 2014

The Research Director
Finance and Administration Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000



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Dear Research Director

Housing Industry Association (HIA) Submissions- *Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014*

HIA welcomes the opportunity to make submissions with respect to the abovementioned legislative proposal.

HIA writes with reference to the proposed amendments to the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (the Act).

The Queensland commercial building industry in recent times has been confronted with regular interference of unions entering workplaces under the guise of safety concerns to push industrial agendas. Such agendas have seen employers faced with heightened disputation, decreases in productivity, and losses in profitability.

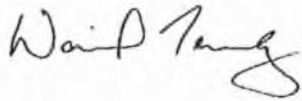
While the Queensland residential construction industry is relatively 'unscathed' by union interference, it is a genuine concern for industry that the experiences encountered by commercial counterparts, will shift to the residential sector. Should such misuse of entry provisions shift to the residential sector it likely there will be detrimental effects on small and medium businesses.

While HIA is supportive of the need to ensuring workplace health and safety, the current misuse of right of entry provisions have led to significant inefficiencies and costs burdens for businesses, which do not support the objectives or the intent of the Act.

The proposed legislative amendments provide for further certainty for industry with aligned entry notice periods between the Act and the *Fair Work Act 2009*, clarification as to notice for assisting a health and safety representative, increased penalties for non-compliance with entry permit conditions, and remove the power of representatives to direct workers to cease unsafe work. It is further acknowledged that the proposed amendments do not change the right of the Government's safety inspectors to access workplaces without notice to address urgent safety issues, so therefore there should be no reduction in the safety of workers as a result of the proposed changes.

HIA accordingly endorses the proposed amendments, as a step in the right direction towards addressing current misuse of union right of entry, which diverges from the current intent and objectives of the Act.

Yours sincerely
HOUSING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION LIMITED

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Warwick Temby', written in a cursive style.

Warwick Temby
Executive Director

