

**STRONGER  
TOGETHER**

**AWUEQ  
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6 July 2015

Ms Di Farmer MP  
Chair  
Finance and Administration Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
Brisbane Q 4000

By email: [fac@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:fac@parliament.qld.gov.au)

Dear Ms Farmer

I refer to the Inquiry into *Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015* (the Bill).

The Australian Workers' Union (AWU) represents workers from a large number of industries and has an interest in ensuring the representation and well-being of members across many workplaces. The AWU covers workers in industries such as civil construction, retail, sugar, water, manufacturing, healthcare, aged care, community services, gas and hydrocarbons, aluminium, steel and mining.

The AWU supports the Government restoring Labour Day back to the first Monday in May each year.

There has been a long and historical connection between Labour Day and the first Monday in May.

Not only has "May Day" been important globally for the labour movement to recognise the achievements of workers and their unions, including the 8 hour day, it also has direct relevance to the AWU and its members here in Queensland.

It is common knowledge that there was a shearers' strike 125 years ago in 1891 which galvanised shearers and labourers in rural Queensland and provided momentum for workers to pursue legislative representation in the State Assembly.

As part of this strike, it should be recognised that on 1 May 1891, as 13 union members who had taken part in the shearers strike were standing trial for conspiracy against the Crown in Rockhampton a march was held by unionist in Barcaldine. "The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported that 1340 men took part, of whom 618 were mounted on horse. Banners carried

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included those of the Australian Labor Federation, the Shearers' and Carriers' Unions, and one inscribed 'Young Australia'. The leaders wore blue sashes and the Eureka Flag was carried.”<sup>1</sup>

May Day has a special history unique to the AWU and Queensland and should be celebrated on the first Monday in May.

The AWU commends the Bill to the Committee.

If you require any further information in relation to this submission please contact [REDACTED]

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]  
BEN SWAN  
**SECRETARY**

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■ <https://independentaustralia.net/australia/australia-display/1891-shearers-strike-and-the-rise-of-australian-labor,3353>

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