

**Government Response to  
Report of the Education and Workforce Committee  
on  
petition from Fired Up Stilettos: Strippers' Rights are Workers'  
Rights**

**Presented to the House of Representatives**

**In accordance with Standing Order 256**

# Government response to the Report of Education and Workforce Committee on the petition from Fired Up Stilettos

## Introduction

- 1 The Education and Workforce Committee recently considered the petition of Fired Up Stilettos—*Strippers' Rights are Workers' Rights (the petition)*. The petition seeks to improve the working conditions for independent contractors in the adult entertainment industry. The petition draws attention to arbitrary fines and withdrawal of work against entertainers who have complained or confronted management about issues; high commission rates; and poor compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act. Its three main proposals are
  - 1.1 Establish the right of adult entertainment workers to bargain collectively while maintaining independent contractor status
  - 1.2 Outlaw all fines and bonds between employers and contractors, and
  - 1.3 Establish a nationwide mandatory maximum of 20 per cent that an employer can take from a contractor's profits.
- 2 The Government has carefully considered the Education and Workforce Committee's report on the petition (**the report**). The Government responds to the report in accordance with Standing Order 252.

## Committee recommendations

- 3 The Committee found that current legislative and regulatory systems do not provide an accessible and effective means for independent contractors in the adult entertainment industry to enforce minimum standards for health and safety or fair contract terms. It recommended that the Government address the concerns raised by the petitioner and matters raised in the report, especially when it undertakes reviews of fair trading legislation and the health and safety system.

## Government response

- 4 The Government will consider the petition's concerns if and when the following legislation is reviewed:
  - 4.1 **Commerce Act 1986:** A review of this legislation is currently underway. This includes consideration of changes to the process for establishing class exemptions, which could enable some independent contractors to undertake collective bargaining.
  - 4.2 **Fair Trading Act 1986:** If the Government conducts a review of this legislation this term, it will consider issues relating to the enforcement of unfair contract term provisions when determining the review's scope.

- 5 The petition raised concerns that WorkSafe was not prioritising regulatory and enforcement actions in the adult entertainment industry. The Government has recently completed a first-principles review of the health and safety at work system. Key changes resulting from this review will focus the system, including WorkSafe, on critical risks.

## **Conclusion**

- 6 The Government response does not commit to introducing any new legislation or obligations on businesses. However, it does commit to considering the petition's concerns if and when relevant legislation is reviewed. The Government considers this approach to be the most efficient way to address the petition's concerns.