

## **Motions for National Council, October 2020**

The following motions were submitted by NTEU Fightback activists for consideration at the National Council meeting scheduled for 30-31 October 2020. A further meeting of National Council to discuss bargaining is now scheduled for December 10-11.

### **1. Access to members lists for delegates**

Motion: National Council:

- Notes that the long standing practice of recognised NTEU delegates having access to up to date lists of union members in their area has been altered, and that many delegates are now being refused access to these lists.
- Notes that this change happened concurrently with the debate on the National “Jobs Protection” Framework within the NTEU.
- Directs the National General Secretary to distribute, to all delegates to this meeting of National Council, all correspondence between federal office, state divisional offices, and branches, regarding this change of policy.
- Directs the National Executive to reinstate the previous practice of delegates and branch committee members having access to branch lists as required.

Moved: Alma Torlakovic

Seconded: Liam Ward

### **2. Application to insert conversion clause into Higher Education Industry - Academic Employees - Award**

Motion: National Council:

- Notes that the Higher Education - Academic Employees - Award has no provision for conversion of casual employees to ongoing positions.
- Notes that casual conversion is now part of more than one hundred modern awards (including the General Retail Award, the Hospitality (General) Award, and the Higher Education Industry - Professional Employees - Award).
- Believes that casual conversion is an important industrial right for all regularly employed casual employees, including casual academic staff.
- Requests an explanation of why this important right was not included in the updating of the Academic Employees Award.
- Directs the National Executive to remedy this defect at the first available opportunity, by applying to vary the Higher Education - Academic Employees - Award to include a casual conversion clause no less favourable than the clause included in the Higher Education Industry - Professional Employees - Award.

Moved: Liam Ward

Seconded: Katie Wood

### **3. Need for fighting campaign on job cuts and public funding**

Motion: National Council

- Notes that a successful campaign against job will consist of:
  - A clear public position in opposition to job cuts, whether carried out by compulsory redundancies, voluntary redundancies, or other means.
  - Systematic workplace organising.
  - Mass mobilisation of staff and students.
  - Prompt production of high quality campaign material.
  - Stringent enforcement of enterprise agreement clauses governing consultation and workload.
- Notes that our strongest weapon on any issue, including budget cuts and job cuts, is industrial action, and that all campaign measures have to be directed towards building capacity for industrial action either in the short or medium term.
- Notes that such campaigns have been a rarity in higher education since the successful 2012 “No Cuts” campaign at the University of Sydney, despite many dramatic attacks on jobs.
- Notes that many teacher unions in the United States such as the Chicago Teachers Unions have turned themselves around by a more combative approach on questions of funding and jobs.
- Notes that such campaigns are a better approach to preserving jobs and rebuilding union power than the failed strategy of concessionary bargaining embodied in the “National Jobs Protection Framework”.
- Endorses the strategy for fighting jobs outlined above, outlined in greater depth in the NTEU Fightback document *Fighting back against job cuts*, available on the Resources page of the NTEU Fightback website: <https://www.nteufightback.site/resources>
- Directs that this article be published in the Advocate to promote wide discussion among members on this important topic.

Moved: Alma Torlakovic

Seconded: Katie Wood

### **4. Measures to address job insecurity**

Motion: National Council

- Notes that workers in other industries have been able to secure effective remedies to casualisation, including
  - Ratios, compelling employers to hire workers into ongoing positions beyond a certain fixed proportion of employees. For instance, members of the United Workers Union at Wyong recently won a ratio of 80% of workers to be hired in ongoing roles, after a two week dispute.
  - Hard conversion clauses, mandating that casual workers will be converted after a fixed period of time as casuals.

- Immediate conversion clauses, mandating that long term casuals be immediately hired as ongoing staff.
- Believes that these measures would be effective in addressing the epidemic of casualised and insecure work in the higher education sector.
- Endorses claims along these lines being part of the demands in bargaining for the next EA round.

Moved: Katie Wood

Seconded: Liam Ward

## **5. Support for a campaign to restore the right to protest in New South Wales**

Motion: National Council:

- Notes that (as of September 3, when this motion was submitted), demonstrations are effectively banned in New South Wales, by reason of not being exempted from the orders given under the Public Health Act.
- Notes that while 300 people are permitted in pubs and restaurants, up to ten thousand are permitted at NRL matches, and thousands can congregate on beaches, even small socially distanced protests are broken up by riot police, with participants and organisers fined and harassed
- In general supports stringent public health measures where required to suppress or eliminate the spread of Covid-19, but views the repressive measures currently directed at protests as anti democratic and hypocritical
- Calls for socially distanced protest activity to be exempted from the restrictions imposed under the Public Health Act, and directs the National Executive to write to the NSW government to convey this position.
- Commends University of Sydney branch for endorsing and publicising a protest against budget cuts and in defence of the right to demonstrate.
- Endorses the campaign “Democracy is essential: Restore the right to protest in NSW”
- Demonstrate union support for this campaign by publicly endorsing this statement (along with David Shoebridge, NSW Greens MLC; Dr Mehreen Faruqi, Greens Senator for NSW and many others)

<https://democracyisessential.wordpress.com/2020/08/31/statement/>

Moved: Alma Torlakovic

Seconded: Liam Ward