

# MEDIA RELEASE

## Proposed workers compensation reforms fail workers

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The NSW Bar Association opposes the NSW Government's proposed workers compensation reforms, which are contrary to the interests of workers in New South Wales.

President of the NSW Bar Association, Dr Ruth Higgins SC, said the NSW Government has only recently published an [exposure Bill](#) and has hastily convened a truncated [Parliamentary inquiry](#) to consider the proposed reforms.

"Given the potential effect of these reforms on millions of workers, the consultation process has been wholly deficient," Dr Higgins said.

"The NSW Bar Association has today appeared before the Standing Committee on Law and Justice and made a [submission](#) to the Parliamentary inquiry concerning the proposed reforms."

"The Association's submission to the inquiry, and the available evidence, indicate that the proposed reforms will substantially reduce the ability of workers to access compensation, while introducing additional and unnecessary delays. Possible alternatives for reducing the financial pressures on the scheme appear not to have been adequately considered."

"It is deeply concerning that the exposure Bill proposes to abolish substantial compensation rights for psychological injury for those assessed as having a Whole Person Impairment of less than 31 percent."

"Many legal practitioners, who have spent their careers representing injured workers, have never encountered a person being assessed as having a 31 percent Whole Person Impairment for a psychological injury. The proposed reforms will radically reduce workers compensation rights for psychological injury in NSW," Dr Higgins said.

"The exposure Bill would also prevent a worker, who has been injured by bullying or sexual or racial harassment, from receiving any workers compensation, until that worker has obtained a relevant finding from a tribunal, commission or court."

"This proposed requirement will add substantial cost and delay for an injured worker and continues to apply in circumstances where there is no dispute as to whether the worker is injured."

"The NSW Parliament should not support the Bill in its current form. It should insist upon a careful and genuine review of the proposed amendments," Dr Higgins said.

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