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## **\$4 internship program a pathway to exploitation**

The Turnbull Government's PaTH internship program announced in the Federal Budget appears devoid of practical protections and will pave the way for further exploitation of younger workers, the SDA, the union for retail, fast-food and warehouse workers has warned.

SDA National Secretary, Gerard Dwyer, said at a time when we already know of ongoing instances of exploitation of workers in some industries across the country, the program appears to allow unscrupulous employers to use young people as free labour.

"This isn't a plan to create real, fair-paying jobs – this is a plan that will open the doors to the exploitation of younger workers," Mr Dwyer said.

"Of course you'd hope the majority of employers would do the right thing, but by proposing a system whereby employers can basically get free labour the Turnbull Government is just asking for trouble.

"This Federal Government has already proven it is not willing to take action to stamp out the exploitation of workers. The Prime Minister has not said a single word about the 7-Eleven issue which we know is still ongoing, and now he wants to make it even easier for employers to get their hands on cheap labour.

"We should be paving the way for young people to get entry level jobs that pay them fairly for the work they do and provide a pathway for long-term employment, not creating a system where young people are forced to work for less than the minimum wage.

"At the moment it seems there is nothing in place to prevent these "internships" from replacing jobs that would usually be covered by the Award, there are real questions around exactly what kind of training is going to take place, and there are no mechanisms in place to ensure that workers aren't just sent packing after their 6 month internship.

"There are going to be a number of employers looking at this program and rubbing their hands together. There's no doubt there are some unscrupulous employers out there who will be asking themselves why you'd pay someone minimum wage when the Federal Government has just agreed to give you \$1000 cash and free labour as an extra?

"This is a real risk for young and inexperienced workers."

**Media contact: Alana Mew, 0419 929 722**