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## **Chamber supports call for improvements to the Small Business Fair Dismissal Code: “Good for employers, good for employees”**

The ACT’s peak industry body, the Canberra Business Chamber, has lent its support to proposed changes to the Small Business Fair Dismissal Code recommended by the Australian Small Business & Family Enterprise Ombudsman.

“Any changes that gives both employers and employees more certainty are to be welcomed,” Chamber CEO Dr Michael Schaper said today, “and the Ombudsman’s report certainly does that.

“Though well-intentioned, the current regulatory framework around the rights and obligations of businesses when it comes to finishing employment are sometimes murky. Many businesses complain about this. The penalties can be significant for non-compliance, and it’s one of the key things that keeps local business owners awake at night.

“In fact, many businesses have said that they would employ more staff, but the lack of flexibility in the current system, and the penalties for getting it wrong, mean that its often just easier not to offer anyone a job at all.

“As a result, many Australians are missing out on the opportunity to get a job. Persons seeking new careers find it hard to make the transition. Students have difficulty getting part-time work to support themselves. Welfare recipients continue to be stuck on unemployment benefits. And our economy can’t grow. No one wins.

“At the same time, employees are often uncertain about their rights.”

The Ombudsman’s recommendations include a call for more specifically defined processes; clearer definitions of serious misconduct that might justify dismissal; more awareness and education; and the creation of a dedicated Small Business Division within the Fair Work Commission. The full report can be found at: [www.asbfeo.gov.au/reviews/fair-dismissal-code](http://www.asbfeo.gov.au/reviews/fair-dismissal-code).