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QLD Catholic employers warned over 5-minute strike wage loss

Queensland Catholic employers have been warned against major wage deduction of employees' pay over a five-minute work stoppage next week.

Thousands of Queensland Catholic school teachers and support staff are taking a five-minute stop work action next Tuesday, 15 August 2023.

The action is timed for 8:30am to 8:35am.

Independent Education Union – Queensland and Northern Territory (IEU-QNT) Branch Secretary Terry Burke slammed any employer deduction of wages beyond what they are legally required to do under the Act.

"Employees are taking lawful protected action – which means the employers are obligated to withhold pay for only the time employees take action," Mr Burke said.

"In this case – that is five minutes.

"Instead, Queensland Catholic school employers have threatened to withhold employee pay of up to a full day if the action goes ahead.

"Such action should only occur if employees were taking unprotected industrial action – which is not true.

"These employees have followed the law and are legally authorised to take protected industrial action.

"They have done so as the only recourse available to them given the employer failure to address critical concerns as part of negotiations for a new agreement.

"Negotiations have reached a stage where the employers think it's all over but there is no in-principle agreement and we are far from a ballot on an employer proposed document.

"Employees are taking the action as part of a campaign to address the workload crisis that is seeing teachers leave the sector in droves.

"Employees also want respect shown to their school support staff by employers paying them contemporary wages for the work they do.

"Five minutes is five minutes – not any more than that.

"Catholic employers are on notice that any wage deduction of more than five minutes is ill-conceived and inappropriate and will be fought vigorously," Mr Burke said.

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The Independent Education Union – Queensland and Northern Territory (IEU-QNT) represents more than 17,000 teachers, school support staff, principals, early childhood education and VET and RTO employees across Queensland and the Northern Territory. www.ieuqnt.org.au