



Business & Professional Women Australia

Inclusive of Young BPW
ABN 50 956 174 998

PO Box 193 Surrey Hills
Victoria Australia 3127

Phone: +61 3 9895 4487
Facsimile: +61 3 9898 0249

Email: bpwaust@bpw.com.au
Web: www.bpw.com.au

7 February 2011

Robert Oakeshott

Dear Mr Oakeshott

I am writing to you regarding the Coalition's Paid Parental Leave (Reduction of Compliance Burden for Employers) Amendment Bill 2010. It is my understanding that the Coalition intends to introduce this Amendment Bill to the Parliament this week.

Business and Professional Women Australia is very concerned about this Bill and we urge you to oppose the Bill which undermines the Paid Parental Leave scheme that commenced on 1 January 2011. It has been 5 weeks since the scheme was introduced to the Australian community and there has not been sufficient time for an evaluation of the implications of the process of the payment system.

Our organisation represents business owners and employees in the Australian workforce and many of our small business owners did have concern about the payment process and the implications for their businesses. However they agreed that Paid Parental Leave was essential for Australian women and that BPW Australia would support the Government model of Paid Parental Leave and keep it under review.

We believe that women who work should be treated on an equal footing with all employees - why should their maternity leave payments be treated as welfare payments? We also believe payment via Centrelink will disenfranchise women from their employer while on paid parental leave and could have a significant impact on the number of women who return to their employer at the cessation of the leave.

Further, female employees of government services receive their parental leave payments directly from their employer ie Ambulance, Police and Health so why should there be a difference between government and non government employees.

The Coalition should listen to the wishes of the Australian community who support Paid Parental Leave and they should give the scheme fair time before trying to change the Scheme.

On behalf of working women and women business owners I urge you to oppose the Bill if it is presented to the Parliament.

I would be pleased to further discuss the issue with you and I can be contacted on 0412 259 656

Yours faithfully,

Marilyn Forsythe,
National President.