



30th June 2014

The Parliamentary Inquiry into the Child Support Program,

economic Security4Women (eS4W) is an alliance of women's organisations united in the belief that economic wellbeing and financial security are essential for women and will enable women of all ages to have an equal place in society.

The role of eS4W is to:

- bring together women's organisations and individuals from across Australia to share information, identify barriers to women's economic security and to identify solutions by prioritising the key issues for action to bring about change
- engage actively with the Australian Government on policy issues as part of a better more informed and representative dialogue between women and government.

As a National Women's Alliance we take a lead in ensuring that the voices of as many women as possible are heard, especially those who in the past have found it difficult to engage in advocacy and decision making.

It is from this position that we offer our support to and endorse the submissions to the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Child Support Program of two of our members, WIRE Women's Information and the National Council for Single Mothers and their Children.

Given the focus of the alliance is on the long term economic wellbeing of women, we suggest that the Child Support Program is improved to ensure single resident parents, of whom the majority are women, receive child support payments regularly and that these payments reflect the capacity of the non-residential parent to financially support their child/children.

eS4W does not have a particular focus on violence against women but works with our sister alliance, Australian Women Against Violence Alliance (AWAVA), we are concerned with gender equity and do see any form of violence against women as the worst display of gender inequity within our families and communities.

We therefore commend to you the initial findings of the publicly funded research into women's experiences of financial abuse, undertaken by WIRE Women's Information and urge you to consider how the Child Support Program in its current form, can be and is used to continue violence against women and their children, after separation and divorce, and urge changes to be made to the program in order to eliminate this potential.

Please contact us for any further information

Kind regards

Sandra Cook
Chair
economic Security4Women