

**From:**  
**To:** [Community Affairs Committee \(SEN\)](#)  
**Subject:** Response to Fairer Paid Parental Leave Amendment Bill 2015  
**Date:** Monday, 20 July 2015 10:33:29 AM

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Att:

**Committee Secretary**  
**Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs**

To Whom it May Concern,

I am and have been in full-time employment for 90% of my adult working life, starting at the age of 17. That is 18+ years of hard work and Tax to the Australian government. For what?

I am not of the generation who were able to access free university between 1974 and 1989. As such all of my studies have had to be 'around' working full-time, paid upfront and inevitably plenty of late night-studies and commuting. Not ideal and I can guarantee you, a very difficult, lengthy and exhausting process. Nor have I been lucky enough to sponge off of my parents and claim a HECS debt for any of this to give me head start in life.

I was also unfortunate to receive a redundancy during the GFC, that took 6 months to just to find part-time work to support myself as a single person with no partner of any description (though I can tell you I know plenty of people who have/still lie about that to Centrelink). I had a small window of assistance in the form of rent assistance and Austudy during 2010 NOT before I was made live off the redundancy package before I was deemed 'broke enough' by Centrelink, and by that I mean absolutely FLAT BROKE, before they could offer me financial help. And we call this the lucky country?

What is the point of telling you all of this?

I am now nearing 35, in a long-term relationship (planning to get married) and realistically staring down the barrel of my 'twilight' child bearing years, of which you may like to know, I have not had any despite my very being wanting otherwise! Still working full-time and the ONE AND ONLY break in life that will be of use to me and my partner (who is a carpenter, without regular work) is to receive the government paid parental leave, plus the generosity of my employer who also offers paid maternity leave.

I am from Western Australia, I have no family support to draw on and without going into an episode of days of our lives, my mother-in-law has made it crystal clear "that her grandchildren will not be ruining her social life". Yes, she actually said that to me. I am left with potentially raising my child for 3 months before returning to work in some capacity and putting that poor little person into a day-care centre to keep feeding the Federal government TAX to keep this country afloat, and every other 'bright' idea that they decide

to waste money on.

Well I have an idea – how about you waste it on me for a change?

Not the dole bludgers who've not worked a day in their pathetic little lives, not the baby boomers and retirees – who have had every bit of good-luck and fortune known to modern man – AND STILL WANT MORE, not individual mothers earning over \$100K and up to \$150K without an income test on their partner, not giant tech companies using tax-avoidance through off-shore accounting, not international aid or another helicopter joy-ride for Bronwyn Bishop. Focus on those groups and any budget woes, will not around be for long.

So there you have it, stuck between a rock and a bloody hard space with my options in trying to return to work to pay my modest Sydney home in Western Sydney and raise my future children with no benefit for contributing to this great country.

I have a great idea – I should quit my job, go on the dole, pop out a dozen kids all on YOUR dollar and pretend I live on my own or have a 'disability' and live rent free on this great country of ours like everyone else does.

But you know why I won't, because I love to work and I should be rewarded for it.

That's something that doesn't happen, good hard working people being rewarded for doing the right thing. Imagine that.

**Michelle Kenworthy**