



Australian  
**Small Business and  
Family Enterprise**  
Ombudsman

11 March 2020

Committee Secretary  
Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

**By email:** [community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au)

Dear Sir/Madam

**Paid Parental Leave Amendment (Flexibility Measures) Bill 2020**

We support the Government's intention to provide more flexibility over use of, and extended access to the existing Paid Parental Leave (PPL) scheme. These amendments will support small business owners and self-employed workers who are currently disadvantaged when they are not able to take their PPL in one continuous block and lose their entitlement to be paid.

Small business owners and the self-employed do not have access to enterprise agreements or other forms of "employer" support. These entrepreneurs also cannot normally absent themselves from work for solid weeks at a time and the proposed flexibility for six weeks over the child's second year is welcomed.

Small Business owners want to provide support and flexibility to valued employees who may have parenting responsibilities. The proposed changes will provide advantages such as:

- Improving a business' ability to retain valued employees;
- Improved ability to maintain employee-client relationships;
- Decrease in recruitment costs due to capacity to retain staff; and
- Decrease in employee turnover and resulting on-boarding and training costs.

Any changes to entitlement systems add an administrative burden to small business people already struggling with a complex award system. The changes provided by this Bill should be communicated to the small business community with a comprehensive, targeted education program. Such a campaign could be effectively delivered through government agencies and employer and industry associations.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact Ms Louise Stuart-Watt

Yours sincerely

**Kate Carnell AO**

Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman

T 1300 650 460 E [info@asbfeo.gov.au](mailto:info@asbfeo.gov.au)

[www.asbfeo.gov.au](http://www.asbfeo.gov.au)

Office of the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman  
GPO Box 1791, Canberra City ACT 2601