

I'm opposed to any cuts to the paid parental leave scheme.

I call upon the Senate Committee to consider the long term economic impacts of clawing back this scheme.

It is your duty to obtain appropriate research on how reducing this scheme will impact Australia long term, both financially and socially. Before making any changes you must determine how women's participation in the workplace will be impacted long term as well as the mental health of families including the resulting financial stress on young families at a critical time in their lives, stress factors relating to child care requirements, lack of connection with children due to returning to work within less than 6 months of giving birth. All these factors must be carefully weighed up before any proposed amendments to the scheme.

Furthermore, the committee must consider how unjust and discriminatory it would be to apply these cuts specifically to those working under enterprise agreements. Indeed, calling the bill a "fairer" paid parental scheme is, in itself, misleading and deceptive.

To reduce the scheme specifically for those people who do not have an opportunity to individually negotiate their employment arrangements is taking advantage of those already in a weaker position. These employees have already given up other rights in the enterprise bargaining process in order to receive some benefits which will now be made redundant. The suggestion that this amounts to a fairer scheme is simply false as it ignores the fact that entitlements form part of a negotiated package that employees consider as a whole in order to determine whether working under such conditions is acceptable to them and workable in terms of their needs.

Personally, it is already a stretch for me to work in the public service due to the salary being far less than market rate for an equivalent role in the private sector. However, I have chosen to work in the public service to make a contribution to society and, in making this choice, I carefully weighed up the other benefits of these positions such as suitability to family life.

If the changes to the scheme are passed to apply specifically to stop those under enterprise agreements getting benefits that other employees in Australia are entitled you will be incentivising all young female qualified public servants to leave the public service. I call upon the Committee to evaluate the cost of this prior to making any decision including turn over and recruitment costs as well as the long term knowledge and diversity impact this will have on the sector in a situation where women of a certain age exit the public service en masse.

Finally I call on the Committee to consider why Australia would possibly want to step backwards in supporting young parents in 2016?

Block these backward and discriminatory cuts and progress into the future!