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The Secretary
Standing Committee on Employment and
Workplace Relations
House of Representatives
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PAY EQUITY AND ASSOCIATED ISSUES RELATED TO INCREASING FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN THE WORKFORCE

The following comments are made in a practical application of some of the issues surrounding women in the workforce.

- In Local Government you would hope that there are no issues with pay equity
- The major issues relate to adequate child care places particularly in the newborn to two years of age bracket
- Lack of sufficient incentive for females to return to the workforce, again childcare places and cost of childcare
- Lack of incentives to employers to free up female staff to permit working school hours only. There is a commercial disadvantage to small businesses who provide flexible hours in that it diminishes their competitive advantage, if the female has a highly sought after skill set
- There is a disadvantage to other staff in larger service organisations as they often pick up the slack when staff are working flexible hours
- More consideration of male employment, where the female partner has a particular skill set that is in high demand

Suggestions of an approach

The Government provide a broad range of incentives to employers and individuals alike that includes:

- » A national maternity leave provision paid equally by the employer and government (14 weeks)
- » Additional incentives on individual basis to females with particular tertiary qualifications, experience and skill level where there is deemed to be a skills shortage. This would be regulated through the tax system. This would vary in cycles as the tide turns in these areas as it often does.
- » Funding to individual employer groups (where there is a skills shortage) to increase female participation

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- » Limit to individual employee by application for a reduction in tax paid for defined periods. Extended only upon application by individuals and/or employers, for females who have a skill that is sought after at various periods when skills demand change

Yours faithfully



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