

Monday, 2 June 2008

I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to respond to the inquiry into paid maternity, paternity and parental leave.

My thoughts on the matter are:

1. The lack of universal paid maternity leave is an important indicator of the low value placed on parenting in Australia. Anyone who has witnessed the immediate loss of status parents experience when they move out of the workforce to care for their children can attest to this. Provision of paid leave would be a just acknowledgement of the work parents do and the contribution they are making to the Australian economy.
2. Six months paid leave should be the minimum time considered. This allows for the establishment and maintenance of exclusive breastfeeding. The health, social and psychological benefits and costs savings breastfeeding brings to mothers, babies and the wider society are considerable and do much to improve the quality of the Australian workforce.
3. The rate of paid maternity leave should be configured to allow women to continue to contribute to superannuation. If women can continue to contribute to superannuation during their childbearing years this would compensate for the interrupted nature of their working lives and enable the accrual of higher levels of superannuation by retirement.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Ainsley Morgan