

12th November 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

I write in support of paid parental leave for all Tasmanians both mothers and fathers.

I am the mother of three young children (aged 7, 5 and 2) none of whom have spent a single day in childcare. My partner and I are committed to providing them with a strong emotional foundation and believe that being the primary carers for them in the early stages of their development is what is best for them and best for our family.

As such I currently work part-time from home and my partner limits his work to four days a week, which most employers and co-workers find incredulous in his industry as an electrician.

This commitment has come and does come at a great financial compromise but we believe the benefits are priceless. We were not willing to compromise our family experience for financial gain.

We raised our first two children with no paid parental leave. We were both working in casual or short term contract employment and we took it in turns to play the role of primary carer and chief 'bread winner'. We lived very simply and survived on very little.

I was fortunate enough to be employed in a State Government position when I was pregnant with my third child and as such was entitled to 12 weeks paid maternity leave. My partner was unemployed at that time as he was the primary carer of our other two children. The paid maternity leave was of enormous assistance to us and gave us both time with our new baby and my partner an opportunity to secure new employment.

We believe that both parents should be entitled to paid parental leave to encourage families to spend that special time together in the very early stage of their baby's development. We also believe that shorter working weeks and carers leave should be available for both parents to encourage them to spend more time with their families. Certainly in our experience it has helped to foster strong relationships between us and well adjusted, confident children.

We are aware that many European countries have paid parental leave and think it is time for Australia to step up and demonstrate that we value our children and families.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment.

Yours Sincerely,



Leah Page