



MEDIA STATEMENT

October 26, 2022

Women are visible this federal budget

Treasurer Jim Chalmers and Minister for Finance, Women and the Public Service, Katy Gallagher intentionally foreground women in the federal budget.

With childcare and paid parental leave measures, the October mini budget, Labor's first in ten years, is a genuine attempt to achieve women's economic equality in Australia.

The big-ticket items from Labor's election commitments are covered, with good first steps underpinned by evidence-based data. Structural change will take time.

A lot of what is there was signalled in advance. There are no big surprises.

Some important early work on women's workforce participation

It includes a landmark investment in early childhood education and the biggest changes to the Commonwealth's paid parental leave program since the scheme's inception.

The parental leave changes will make it easier for both parents to take leave to be with their children and easier for Dads to spend vital time learning to parent a newborn. This is critical if we're going to shift the balance of unpaid care work in families. We look forward to more detail on the PPL changes, in particular, more detail about the 'use it or lose it' periods which are not yet specified.

It's a budget that builds on the promise of the Jobs and Skills Summit, with a focus on repairing wages, and an awareness that wages in women-dominated industries are unjustifiably and unsustainable low. We're pleased to see that the wage setting piece in the care sectors is underway.

In the enhanced **Women's Budget Statement**, the Minister for Women, Katy Gallagher, is honest with us about where Australia sits internationally and the challenges ahead of us.

There are tentative steps towards gender responsive budgeting, which is sorely needed to make sure policy is effective and well-targeted as economic pressures grow.

There are gender impact analysis pilots that cast a gender lens over select policies. We understand these will develop with improved sex-disaggregated data and capacity building in the Australian Public Service.

On housing, we are encouraged.

There is additional money under a new Housing Accord that recognises how big and deep the housing supply and affordability problems are. The new money effectively doubles Labor's pre-election commitment to build social and affordable in partnership with the states and territories.

Older women are the fastest growing cohort vulnerable to homelessness and affordable housing is a critical precondition for women's engagement in the workforce. We will wait for more detail about the drive to generate one million properties out of the private market.

ENDS