



Wednesday 10th May 2023

~ MEDIA RELEASE ~

National Council of Women Australia Responds to 2023 Federal Budget

The National Council of Women Australia congratulates the Federal government on a range of commitments announced in this year's Budget. With the cost of living impacting millions of Australians and driving Australian women further into vulnerability, National Council of Women Australia welcomes announcements to alleviate these pressures.

With the women's Budget Statement's four areas of focus; Women's economic equality, ending violence against women and children, leadership and decision-making and women's health and well-being, we acknowledge significant attention to applying a gender-lens across this year's federal budget and government policy in general.

Particularly, National Council of Women Australia acknowledges that more than a million low-income renters, the majority of whom are single mothers, will benefit from an increase to the Commonwealth Rent Assistance program by 15% and the increases to the JobSeeker, Austudy and Youth Allowance support payments.

National Council of Women Australia welcomes the cessation of the ParentsNext program as an acknowledgement of the hard work and sacrifice of single mums in raising their families. We believe that the expansion of the parenting payment eligibility, increases in childcare subsidies and pay increases for aged care workers will further add to the capacity for women's participation in the workforce and their economic security.

With enthusiasm National Council of Women Australia notes the increases expected in building affordable housing and social housing with the pledge to increase the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation's (NHFIC) liability cap to \$7.5 billion (by \$2 billion). We are encouraged by these commitments and look forward to further information on build-to-rent initiatives and reviews of land use to expand the range of housing solutions to combat Australia's housing availability crisis.

Increases to Bulk billing and thus accessibility for women and children to access free and timely healthcare means the difference between proactive and preventative healthcare. Further, we applaud the announcement of a further \$589.3 million investment in women's safety and the acknowledgement that violence against women is a key driver of homelessness, job insecurity and adverse health outcomes.

National Council of Women Australia acknowledges the actions and advocacy of the thousands of women across our 170+ organisational members of the National Council of Women Australia and Constituent Councils Australia-wide over 12 decades to raise the status of women in the community and before law-makers.

"We must continue to recognise the immense contribution of the women of Australia; the women who raise our next generation and that, with continued appropriate cross-industry and government support,

women may continue to make significant economic and financial contributions throughout the course of their lifetimes and secure a retirement future that all Australians deserve”.

.– NCWA President Chiou See Anderson

To read the National Plan and find out what your role can be, please see here:

<https://www.dss.gov.au/ending-violence>

Chiou See Anderson

President – National Council of Women of Australia

President – National Council of Women of Queensland

Treasurer / Board Member – International Council of Women

Noted from:
M E D I A R E L E A S E

SENATOR KATY GALLAGHER
MINISTER FOR FINANCE
MINISTER FOR WOMEN
MINISTER FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICE

LABOR BUDGET BACKS AUSTRALIAN WOMEN

Women's economic equality

The Albanese Government is making investments to support economic inclusion and provide targeted cost-of-living relief for those who are facing the greatest hardship, including:

- \$1.9 billion to expand the eligibility for the Parenting Payment (Single) to single principal carers, the majority of whom are women, with a youngest dependent child aged 8 to under 14 years of age;
- \$2.7 billion to increase the maximum payment rates of Commonwealth Rent Assistance by 15 per cent for all recipients, with single women making up almost half of recipients;
- \$4.9 billion to increase support for people receiving working age and student payments, including JobSeeker; and
- Abolishing the ParentsNext Program from 1 July 2024 and immediately pausing all compulsory requirements for participants as we design a new voluntary program that better meets the needs of parents and sets them up for success.

We are also supporting women's economic equality and helping to close the gender pay gap with investments to support highly feminised workforces, including:

- Backing a 15 per cent increase to the minimum wage for aged care workers, over 85 per cent of whom are women;
- Increased funding for community services, many with highly feminised workforces – including for organisations delivering women's safety initiatives;
- \$8.6 million for the Australian Skills Guarantee, which includes national targets for women in apprenticeships, traineeships and cadetships on major government projects;
- \$91.3 million to boost the mental healthcare workforce through additional psychology placements, the majority of which are women;
- \$72.4 million to build and retain the early childhood education and care workforce, 92 per cent of whom are women; and
- \$67.5 million to support homelessness services during the transition to the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement, supporting jobs that are overwhelmingly done by women, including to assist women and children experiencing domestic and family violence.

Women's safety

Women cannot be equal if they are not safe. This Budget builds on the Government's record \$1.7 billion investment to end violence against women and children in October, and includes:

- \$589.3 million in further investment in women's safety, including to support implementation of the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children. This brings the total funding for women's safety over the last two Budgets to \$2.29 billion.
- Funding for women's safety in this Budget includes:
 - \$262.6 million to address violence against First Nations women and children, including \$194 million for the *Dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan*.
 - \$14.7 million to prevent sexual violence and improve justice responses to victim-survivors of sexual violence;
 - \$46.5 million to expand two highly successful family law property pilot programs, which improve the family law system for separating families;
 - \$159 million to extend the Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Responses National Partnership Agreement; and
 - \$8.5 million for initiatives aimed at early intervention and support for men who want to stop using violence.
- \$57.3 million to support implementation of the Set the Standard: Report on the Independent Review into Commonwealth Parliamentary workplaces; and
- \$134.1 million to support the Office of the eSafety Commissioner to continue their important work to support women and children who experience online harm.

Women's health and wellbeing

The Government is making investments to support women's health and wellbeing, including:

- \$26.4 million to support health and medical research focusing on women's health to develop targeted treatments and improve health outcomes;
- \$11.3 million in support for breastfeeding, including to extend the Australian Red Cross Lifeblood's role to maintain and expand delivery of donor milk across Australia, and to support the Australian Breastfeeding Association's National Breastfeeding Helpline;
- \$16.8 million to introduce a new MBS item for an EndoPredict® brand gene expression profiling test, to determine a patient's risk of recurrent breast cancer;
- \$3.5 million over two years from 2023-24 to the Glen for Women, which provides culturally appropriate alcohol and other drug treatment services to First Nations women;
- \$6.2 million in 2023-24 to support children to build and maintain a positive body image and reduce body dissatisfaction and appearance pressures;
- \$2.8 million in 2023-24 to ensure Australians can continue to access support for eating disorders; and
- \$2.1 million over two years from 2023–24 to support women and girls' participation in sports talent and development programs to increase women's representations in coaching, officiating and sports administration.