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**LABOR'S FAIR GO PLAN TO HELP CLOSE THE GENDER PAY GAP**

Labor will deliver a fair go for Australian women by strengthening the ability of the Fair Work Commission to order pay increases for workers in female dominated industries such as early childhood, aged care, and disability services.

Labor will change the Fair Work Act to make it clear that the Commission must consider pay equity a central objective of the workplace relations system.

Labor will give the Commission greater capacity and funding to conduct Pay Equity Reviews and order pay increases in undervalued feminised industries. Low paid workers should not have to rely on fighting complex, expensive legal cases to secure a decent wage rise.

Pay Equity Reviews will be conducted by a new Presidential member of the Commission, supported by an expert Pay Equity Panel.

We don't need to compare female dominated jobs with male dominated jobs to know that female dominated industries are often poorly paid – that's just a fact. So we will change the Fair Work Act to make it clear that establishing undervaluation of female dominated industries does not require a male comparator.

These reforms are an important part of Labor's plan to close the gender pay gap.

A fair go for all Australians means fair pay and conditions for Australian women.

The gender pay gap is one of the most persistent forms of inequality in the Australian economy. When you consider total remuneration, women still get paid about 23 per cent less than men.

One of the key drivers of the gap is the fact work in traditionally female dominated industries is undervalued.

The average woman working in the most feminised industries such as health care, social assistance and education is paid around \$30,000 less than the average man working in the most male dominated industries such as mining and construction.

Australia's equal pay laws are not working well enough to tackle this problem. Of the 21 applications made since 1994, only one equal remuneration order has been made by the Fair Work Commission.

The Commission's President, Iain Ross, recently said "it is likely [the gender pay gap] will widen again absent any measures to stop it."

That's why Labor will:

- Make gender pay equity an object of the Fair Work Act;
- Establish a statutory Equal Remuneration Principle, to guide the Fair Work Commission's consideration of whether feminised industries are paid fairly;
- Establish a new Pay Equity Panel within the Commission led by a new Presidential Member with specific expertise in gender pay equity; and
- Fund the Commission to establish a Pay Equity Unit that will provide expert research support during equal remuneration matters, and more generally.

This announcement builds on commitments Labor has already made to tackle the gender pay gap, including:

- Reversing cuts to penalty rates, which disproportionately impact women;
- Investing \$400 million to boost women's superannuation balances;
- Setting staged and progressive targets to close the gender pay gap, and making an annual statement to Parliament on progress;
- Legislating so companies with more than 1,000 employees have to report their gender pay gap publicly;
- Changing the Fair Work Act to prohibit pay secrecy clauses and give employees the right to disclose (or not disclose) their pay;
- Requiring the Workplace Gender Equality Agency to publish a list that shows whether a company has undertaken a gender pay gap audit and reported the results to its board; and
- Requiring all Australian Government departments and agencies to conduct gender pay audits within the first year of a Labor Government.

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