

11/5/10

To the Inquiry about Paid Paternal Leave,

While the idea behind this Bill is commendable, in its present format there are several serious problems, such as discrimination towards non-working mothers, an unfair income and work test and the lack of choice on behalf of the parent.

### **DISCRIMINATION**

The first being that while working mothers are being helped financially when having a child, those who do not work are being, so far, ignored.

All families, particularly in the present economic conditions, would earn more money if they could. Those mothers who do not work do so either for health related reasons, or because of family commitments. Some mothers are living with elderly parents, some have several children of young age, some have ill, disabled or frail children and others feel that a mother should spend the first two years at least with the child. Whatever their motives, it is, after all, their choice. By giving extra assistance to those who work, and thus eventually decreasing the current tax benefits, these mothers will be forced into the workplace to make ends meet!

The income and work test are therefore discriminating towards those who do not have a wage from outside work. (Although we all know how much harder the work at home is!)

### **NO CHOICE**

This Bill should be fair and just – and justice is allowing people the freedom to choose. **Those who work and earn under a certain amount should be eligible for extra assistance, and those who stay at home and thus earn nothing should be eligible for the same assistance.** It would be more logical for those who do not work to be given more as they do not have the extra income of a wage (although both groups should be treated equally).

The birth rate in this country is falling drastically, and if the government wants tax payers to cover the costs of the ageing population, then the expenses regarding having a child should be partly covered. The working and the stay-at-home mum make the choice of their role in society, and the government should support them no matter what they choose.

Thank you for giving us this opportunity to voice our concerns.

Yours sincerely,