

Submission regarding the draft Paid Parental Leave Bill 2010

I wish to raise my concern regarding the financial disadvantage to mothers who choose to stay home and care for their own children between pregnancies. I see that Paid Parental Leave as proposed by the Rudd government is discriminatory against those mothers who choose to stay at home and care for their children beyond 6 months of age. All families reduce their income to pay for childcare - whether that care is through 'childcare' or is given by a parent choosing to postpone their return to the workforce and stay home with their child. The bill should be amended to remove the "work test". In its current form Paid Parental Leave is really a bonding time reduction scheme, putting time limits on the amount of time a parent can stay home with their child, as a family who chooses to stay home with their child longer than the 6 month stipulation risks missing out on funding for 2nd or subsequent children, thus they may feel forced back to work sooner than they are comfortable with. The same funding should be given to all mothers to support bonding for every newborn.

I also have concerns regarding the payment of Parental Leave for stillborn babies. I understand there is no provision to withhold Paid Parental Leave from mothers who choose to abort their baby after 20 weeks gestation. I believe an amendment should be made to the Bill to ensure this funding does not go to mothers of babies who are stillborn or die after birth as a result of elective termination.