



**THE RAIL NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED trading as
ALBION PARK RAIL COMMUNITY CENTRE INCORPORATED**

Located on the corner of Ash Avenue & Tongarra Road, Albion Park Rail
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15th August 2022

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Education and Employment
Department of the Senate
Parliament House, CANBERRA ACT 2600

Via email: eec.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Committee

**Re: Inquiry into the Fair Work Amendment
(Paid Family and Domestic Violence Leave) Bill 2022**

On behalf of Albion Park Rail Community Centre, we write concerning the Paid Family and Domestic Violence Leave Bill before the Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment.

Albion Park Rail Community Centre Inc. (APRCCI) is a non-for-profit community-based organisation operating in Albion Park Rail, a suburb of Shellharbour LGA in NSW. The Community Centre is a place where people can come together, meet others, join in group activities, access services and get involved in their local community. We offer a range of social, support and community activities, provide information, support and referrals, crisis intervention, food and emergency assistance, provide a safe place for people and groups to meet, undertake research, social action and lobbying, develop services and programs in the local area and facilitate a range of programs and activities that meet the needs of our local community. Our organisation has been operating for 33 years.

We believe that it is essential for Family and Domestic Violence Leave (F&DVL) to be available to every worker, regardless of who their employer is, and or the nature and or size of their business. Small businesses like ours are less able to manage the hidden costs of not having paid F&DVL such as increased absenteeism and possible staff turnover, training costs and losing business when we have to close the doors because we do not have staff.

APRCCI is a very small organisation, employing one (1) permanent part time staff member and reliant on volunteers. We fully support paid F&DVL and believe the benefits far outweigh any associated costs. We have had paid F&DVL available to our staff for over 12 months as we recognise that when someone is living with family and domestic violence it has costs and negative effects that impact on workplaces.



**APRCCI respectfully acknowledges Aboriginal People as the
Traditional Owners and custodians of the country on which we work and we pay our respect to
Elders past, present and emerging.**



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Having access to resources available through Safe Work Australia, Australian Human Rights Commission and the Australian Services Union, the implementation of our F&DVL has been effortless and straightforward and ensured we had no issues with confidentiality, privacy and other associated matters. We understand that further resources and supports are being developed to assist employers to deal with confidentiality and to assist with implementing F&DVL. Given that 1 in 3 employers in Australia already manages F&DVL, and they also have no issues with confidentiality, we do not see this as a possible concern.

As an employer, we have witnessed the impact of family and domestic violence on our volunteers and the time they need to take when they are faced with a family and or domestic violence incidence. Time is needed to attend court, doctors and counselling appointments, find new premises to live in etc. Our organisation would not be able to cover these costs if our paid staff were in similar circumstances. The cost of replacing paid staff when they have to take leave to deal with family and domestic violence, and or the cost of having to undertake recruitment, training and induct new staff is immense due to staff leaving to deal with or escape the violence.

We expect this Bill to be passed in its entirety, including access to ten (10) days paid leave for workers, including part-time workers and casuals. It cannot be pro-rata as usually the most vulnerable are those in casual and insecure work arrangements. As you are probably aware, women are more likely to be in part time and casual positions, be the victims of family and domestic violence and therefore most affected so they need the 10 days paid F&DVL. In relation to payment for the F&DVL, it must not be calculated at base rates, but at the actual rates of pay inclusive of relevant penalties and loadings. This is vital in ensuring those impacted are not financially disadvantaged when trying to keep safe. If a person is subjected to coercive control behaviours, especially relating to financial abuse, any changes to their regular income could be a red flag for perpetrator and put their safety in jeopardy.

As confirmed, Albion Park Rail Community Centre fully support the Family and Domestic Violence Bill being passed urgently, in its entirety and in the next sitting period and we urge the Senate Committee to recommend this to the whole Senate in its report.

We thank you for the opportunity to be able to express our views on this matter through the submission process and we look forward to a positive outcome. If you require any further information, please contact us.

Yours sincerely

Amy Hans

Chairperson, Albion Park Rail Community Centre Inc.



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