



Brotherhood of St. Laurence
Working for an Australia free of poverty

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change
that lasts

15 December 2023

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs
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Dear Legislation Committee members

Paid Parental Leave Amendment (More Support for Working Families) Bill 2023 [Provisions]

The Brotherhood of St. Laurence (BSL) welcomes the government's commitment to improving Paid Parental Leave (PPL) by extending the scheme to 26 weeks by 2026 and implementing additional measures to support shared care between parents. This Bill will improve outcomes for children and progress efforts toward the more equitable distribution of care between women and men.

However, BSL believes that a crucial measure to progress gender equality and support women's long-term economic security is missing. The Women's Economic Equality Taskforce (WEET) recommended immediate action to legislate the payment of superannuation on all forms of PPL. We acknowledge that government made a commitment in its recent White Paper to deliver on this recommendation in relation to government-funded PPL 'when fiscal circumstances permit'.¹ It is BSL's view that this change cannot wait, as taking time out of the workforce to care for children is a contributing factor to women approaching retirement age with 23 per cent less in median superannuation savings than men.²

We recommend the Bill be amended to include payment of superannuation on government-funded PPL.

Yours sincerely

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¹ Treasury 2023, *Working future: the Australian Government's White Paper on jobs and opportunities*, <<https://treasury.gov.au/employment-whitepaper/final-report>>, p. 229.

² Australian Tax Office 2022, *Taxation statistics 2019-20*, Table 5: Snapshot, viewed 16 November 2023, <https://data.gov.au/data/dataset/taxation-statistics-2019-20/resource/7fbad034-e1ad-43fe-a67a-893fe59be13e?inner_span=True>; Retirement Income Review: final report 2020, <<https://treasury.gov.au/publication/p2020-100554>>.