

Thursday 28 July 2022

10 days paid Family and Domestic Violence leave introduced into parliament after years of union campaigning

After a decade of campaigning for 10 days paid family and domestic violence leave by unions, the new Albanese Government will finally introduce legislation to enshrine the right into the parliament today.

Over the past decade, while successive Coalition Governments refused to support this leave, unions campaigned for, and won it in thousands of workplace agreements in all industries across the country. Today, by enshrining the leave into the National Employment Standards, the Albanese Government will ensure that nearly every worker gets this entitlement, including casual and part-time workers.

Access to this leave will save lives, as it costs \$18,000 on average to escape a violent relationship in Australia and economic security is a key factor determining whether a person subjected to family or domestic violence can escape from a dangerous situation.

At least 1 in 4 women have experienced physical or sexual violence since the age of 15 by a current or former intimate partner – a national crisis that has worsened during the pandemic. The union movement will be holding a commemorative service in Canberra this morning to pay tribute to all the lives lost to family and domestic violence.

The ACTU recently won 10 days of family and domestic violence in all Awards, covering an estimated 2.6 million workers. Today's Bill, when passed, will cover an additional 8.44 million workers.

Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O'Neil:

“For over a decade unions campaigned for 10 days paid family and domestic violence leave in the NES so that no worker would miss out. We were met with constant opposition by the former Coalition Government, but we never gave up. Today, while we celebrate the introduction of paid FDV leave into parliament, we also stop and remember all the lives lost too soon and the struggle that continues.

“Family and domestic violence is a national emergency in Australia with 1 in 4 women having experienced some form of violence since the age of 15 at the hands of an intimate partner. It cannot be understated just how critical winning paid FDV leave is – lives will be saved.

“It costs \$18,000 on average to escape a violent relationship in Australia and economic security is a primary factor determining whether a person subjected to family or domestic violence can escape from a dangerous situation. Winning 10 days paid FDV leave will allow many more women to escape violence and keep their jobs.

“We pay tribute to the many thousands of union members around the country who have tirelessly campaigned to win this critical new right for working people”

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