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Gender pay gap hits new high while Abbott Government waters down workplace gender reporting

New ABS figures showing the gender pay gap has blown out to 18.8 per cent comes one day after the Abbott Government released watered down rules for workplace reporting on gender equity.

The blow out in average weekly earnings for full time workers means Australian men now earn \$298.10 more than Australian women each week.

ACTU President Ged Kearney said the government's failure to act is deeply disappointing.

"If the Coalition Government is serious about addressing gender inequality and the record high 18.8 per cent gender pay gap it needs to strengthen workplace gender equality reporting.

"The government has delayed its decision about what details businesses will be required to report for women in non-management roles, which represents the majority of women in the workforce.

"Without meaningful data employers cannot identify where gender pay gaps exist and take action to address discrimination and barriers many women face.

"The Workplace Gender Equality Agency needs to be strengthened – not watered down."

Ms Kearney said the government can no longer pay lip service to increasing women's participation in the workforce and tackling inequality.

"The time for talk is over – Australian working women need action.

"If the Coalition government is serious about increasing women's participation in the workforce and tackling gender inequality then there are a number of measures it can take."

Australian Unions call on the government to:

- Expand the existing paid parental leave scheme to 26 weeks (at the minimum wage) and include superannuation
- Increase childcare funding
- Target funding to ensure social, community and care workers, who are mostly women, receive decent wages and conditions
- Revoke the Fair Work Amendment Bill's proposal to allow employers to ask parents with caring responsibilities to trade off wages and conditions in return for family friendly hours
- Boost rather than water down the Workplace Gender Equality reporting legislation

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