

Friday, 29 May 2015

Unions urge Victorian Family Violence Royal Commission to recommend domestic violence leave

The Victorian Government should support domestic violence leave as a workplace entitlement to help tackle the scourge of family violence.

The ACTU has lodged a submission to the Victorian Family Violence Royal Commission endorsing and supporting the Victorian Trades Hall Council's submission that domestic violence leave should be available for all workers.

Having access to domestic violence leave means victims have time to attend court appearances and related appointments, seek legal advice and make relocation arrangements.

It helps an employee experiencing family violence keep their job and maintain financial independence, which is critical for women trying to escape a violent relationship.

The ACTU currently has a claim before the Fair Work Commission to give more than four million workers covered by an award access to ten days paid domestic violence leave for permanent staff and ten days unpaid leave for casuals.

The ACTU claim was endorsed by domestic violence campaigner and Australian of the Year Rosie Batty at the 2015 ACTU Congress earlier this week.

Australian Unions commend the Victorian State Government for taking steps to tackle the problem of family violence through its Royal Commission.

Key facts:

- 39 women in Australia have been killed by their male partner so far this year
- Over 1.6 million employees now have access to paid domestic violence leave in union negotiated workplace agreements
- Domestic violence costs the Australian economy \$16.8 billion each year

Quotes attributable to ACTU President Ged Kearney:

“Domestic violence is a whole of society issue and that includes the workplace and employers. We all need to tackle this issue together.

“Having a job and financial stability is critical for women to escape a violent and abusive relationship.

“By providing domestic violence leave employers are helping send the message that family violence must not be tolerated or swept under the carpet.

“Unions urge the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence to advocate for domestic violence leave as a workplace entitlement to help women keep their jobs and maintain financial independence as they escape a violent relationship.”

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