



Council Commends Bipartisanship commitment to end violence against women

The Ethnic Communities Council of WA (ECCWA) today welcomed the announcements by the Federal Government, Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Minister for Women the Hon Kelly O'Dwyer of further strong funding commitments as part of the Fourth Action Plan to reduce violence against women and children; and The ALP's ten days paid domestic and family violence leave which will be legislated into the National Employment Standards (NES) and flexible support packages to help domestic violence survivors leave and rebuild announced by Tanya Plibersek Deputy leader of the opposition

"We congratulate the government and the opposition in making this funding available. Violence against women and children is something we have been working to eliminate over a considerable period of time. Funding of this nature will allow the programs to be rolled out more widely and effectively" said Nasreen Lang, Women's Vice President of the Council.

As the Chair of the Harmony Alliance, Maria Dimopoulos, indicated today "Women from migrant and refugee backgrounds are less likely to seek assistance in situations of family violence due to compounding barriers. In order that these measures reach women from migrant and refugee communities, we hope they will include specific and tailored supports."

ECCWA endorses the views expressed by Maria Dimopoulos above but also highlight an area of considerable concern. This relates to the intersection of Women's policy and the migration system. In particular, the question of reporting that arises when women on temporary visas have to make a decision in respect of whether they report the perpetrated violence for fear that they may lose their visa status.

"We have been assisting a number of women who have had to face this predicament over the last few months. There are so many issues that have arisen, ranging from the lack of appropriate refuge places, or appropriate support services through to the lack of any family support structures for these CaLD women. The lack of English exacerbates these issues" said Ms Lang.

"The expertise in dealing with these women lies with specialised Multicultural organisations like ISHAR and ECCWA that have services specifically established to deal with these issues. It is therefore vital that when the allocation of funds is undertaken by the government agencies that these organisations receive the appropriate level of funding that they may require", she added.

"Cultural diversity in WA is at an all-time high with in excess of 34% of our population born overseas. Further, over half our population is either born overseas or have one parent born overseas. This diversity is often lauded by our governments as a measure of our multicultural harmony. We must ensure that culturally appropriate services are provided to this diverse community" said Mr Ramdas Sankaran, President of ECCWA. "Much more needs to be done to reduce the number of perpetrators and the heinous family and domestic violence crimes they commit, especially within CaLD communities", he added.

"Regardless of which party wins the May federal election family and domestic violence measures will be enhanced and that is most welcome", said Ms. Lang.

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