

BPW Australia Gender Equity Indicators

Position Statement March 1 2014

BPW Australia is dismayed by news this week that the government is considering changing the reporting around the Workplace Gender Equity Indicators only recently introduced. If these proposals are implemented, the concern of our members -- employers and employees-- is that systemic discrimination will continue to prevent gender equity in the workplace.

For the first time ever data is being collected from companies with more than 100 employees, who report on information such as gender composition of the workforce and governing bodies, remuneration, positions held, hours worked, flexible work arrangements for carers, and consultation on gender equality. From this, companies themselves are encouraged to identify unconscious bias in selection and promotion practices that currently impede women's workforce participation and career advancement.

To have any meaningful impact on understanding the continued disparity in wages and leadership positions for women in this country, and given the lack of accurate basic information collected in the past, we ask the government to ensure that reporting continues unchanged.

BPW Australia recognises the economic cost to companies to comply with the reporting standards, but remains concerned that any attempt to decrease the number of companies reporting would weaken the restructuring of outdated work practices.

We ask the government to respect the fact that the current reporting arrangements were widely discussed with the corporate sector and women's and other community organisations, and reflect a broad consensus on the way forward in ensuring gender equity in the workplace.

BPW Australia has been an advocate for gender pay equity for more than 60 years and will continue to support change that can improve women's full participation in all aspects of the economy, returning benefits to individuals and businesses alike.

For further information contact:

Director of Policy: Andrea Cross

dirpolicy@bpw.com.au