

08 September 2022

Select Committee on Work and Care
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

By email: workandcare.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Committee Secretariat,

Re: Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia's comment on and support for the Work and Family Policy Roundtable submission

On behalf of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia (the Academy) I am writing to endorse the Work and Family Policy Roundtable (W+FPR) submission to the Senate Select Committee on Work and Care.

The Academy is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that draws on the expertise of its 700 elected Fellows to provide practical, evidence-based advice to governments, businesses, and the community on important social policy issues. Several Academy Fellows are members of the W+FPR and contribute to the important research which underpins this network. In addition, the W+FPR submission has been reviewed by other independent Academy Fellows with relevant expertise.

The Academy considers that Australia needs new and bold policies to enable fair and equitable access to employment and support for care. Investing in care can generate significant social and economic benefits, including improving gender equality, women's workforce participation and financial security.¹

To achieve better ways in which jobs and care responsibilities can be combined to create outcomes in the interests of individuals, families, and Australian society, the Academy recommends that the Select Committee:

1. Consider the work/care nexus from three interrelated perspectives – workers, carers (paid and unpaid) and the people and families to whom care and support is provided. It will be through such a multi-perspective approach that optimal policies will be able to be formulated, funded, and implemented.

¹ [Investing in Care: Recognising and valuing those who care](#)

2. Consider strategies to sustainably fund and support a highly skilled properly paid care workforce in all relevant sectors. Employment conditions that provide job security, predictable working time arrangements, paid leaves and a living wage, lie at the heart of a robust work/care regime. Reforms are needed to ensure the system delivers for all workers regardless of their employment status, sector or gender.
3. Take a disaggregated, intersectional approach to the impact of work/care policy on different worker and carer population groups. Any assumption in policy or practice that one size fits all must be set aside, not in order to complicate the way forward, but rather to ensure that the way forward reflects the diversity and changing nature of workers and carers in Australian society.

In regard to paid parental leave specifically, the Academy draws our recent podcast episode to the attention of the Select Committee '[Paid Parental Leave - where we are and where we want to be](#)'. This podcast outlines challenges with the current system design and presents opportunities to improve the scheme.

Should you have any queries please contact Andrea Verdich (Policy Manager) on 0438 218 352 or andrea.verdich@socialsciences.org.au .

Yours sincerely,



Professor Richard Holden
FES FASSA
President