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O'Dwyer puts off action on superannuation gender gap

Minister Kelly O'Dwyer has announced that women will have to wait until September for information about any economic reforms aimed at closing the gender gaps in super and wages.

The full-time gender pay gap stands at 15.3% across all industries, through women's entire working lives and into retirement.

A recent report by the John Curtin Research Centre listed a range of policy solutions to this systemic problem which results in huge numbers of women retiring in poverty:

1. Increasing contributions from 9.5 to 15% by the end of the next decade
2. Removing the \$450 monthly threshold for super payments
3. Finding a legislative solution to the super gender gap
4. A zero-tolerance approach to employer non-compliance
5. An end to government attacks on industry super funds
6. Reducing super account fees
7. Incorporating financial literacy training into school curriculums

In addition the ACTU has also proposed the following policy solutions:

1. Ensuring superannuation is paid for all forms of work, so that women in insecure work are not falling through the gaps
2. Ensuring superannuation is paid on domestic violence leave and parental leave
3. Ensuring superannuation is paid on all wages, not just Ordinary Time Hours which discriminates against women who more often rely on penalty rates to get by

None of these suggestions, or any other policy options, have been put forward by the Turnbull Government.

Quotes attributable to ACTU National Campaign Coordinator Kara Keys:

"This is entirely unacceptable. The gender pay gap and the resulting gap in retirement savings leaves a huge number of women to retire in poverty. Action is needed now, not at a time which is politically convenient for a failing government.

"This is a Government which has cut penalty rates, failed to act to end wage theft or address casualisation, expand maternity leave or establish a useful period of paid Family and Domestic Violence Leave. This Government has done nothing for women in work other than cut their pay.

"The idea floated last week that women would be allowed to make additional voluntary contributions to their own super balances to close the gap is farcical.

"Women deserve a government which sees the pay gap as a serious issue, not a political problem to be kicked down the road."

ENDS

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