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## ACTU calls for oversight to ensure tax payer funding delivers for women

The ACTU today called on the Federal Government to establish a tripartite oversight body, with representatives from unions, business and Government, to ensure the historic levels of taxpayer funding for economic recovery is delivering for Australian women.

The proposal is made in the ACTU's "Leaving Women Behind: The Real Cost of the Covid Recovery" report released today. The report is a comprehensive response to the Federal Government's 2020 budget, which outlines the specific economic impacts of the pandemic on women and provides a policy platform that would ensure women do not get left behind.

The report highlights the gap of delivery in the budget between men and women and calls on the Morrison Government to ensure that inequality is not further entrenched by Government measures including those announced in the budget to assist Australia's economic recovery.

Even the Federal Government's headline strategy of tax cuts entrenches gender disparity, delivering \$2.28 to men for every dollar that goes to a woman.

The major investments in jobs recovery are aimed at male-dominated industries, and the industries most impacted by Covid and dominated by women have been ignored in the budget.

The lack of investment in establishing free, universal childcare is missed opportunity that would have created jobs and boosted labor market participation.

The introduction of a lower rate in JobKeeper saw twice as many women as men have their payments cut in half.

The ACTU report outlines a series of policies which will support women's employment and economic equality, and would also lead to a more robust recovery, including:

- Introducing a tripartite body including government, unions and business to oversee government job-creation programs and ensure that taxpayer funds are delivering equality for men and women
- Establishing quality, free universal childcare
- Reversing cuts to JobSeeker and expanding the coverage of the Coronavirus Supplement to include those receiving the Disability Support Pension and migrant workers
- Reversing the cuts to JobKeeper and expanding JobKeeper to cover casual and migrant workers and abolishing the lower tier payment
- Providing Paid Pandemic Leave in the National Employment Standards (NES)
- Introducing 10 days paid family and domestic violence leave into the NES
- Investing in healthcare, education, disability, community and social services as well as TAFE
- Addressing the homelessness crisis facing women by investing in social housing

- Reforming super by removing the \$450 monthly income threshold on contributions, making super payable on every dollar for every worker, complying with the legislated super increase next year and legislating a pathway to 15% contributions for all workers.
- Scrapping all early access to super.
- Introducing 26 weeks paid parental leave and enforceable rights to protect all workers with caring responsibilities
- Taking real action to address family and domestic violence which recognises that job and financial security is critical to allowing women to escape abuse.

**Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O’Neil:**

“We know that women are overrepresented in the frontline workplaces which have been keeping our community safe through the pandemic, and they are shouldering an unequal share of the immense caring responsibilities which have arisen from the crisis.

“If the Federal Government is committed to a shared and robust recovery, they must take seriously the particular impact of Covid on women, and the lack of support of the 2020 budget in supporting women’s employment and economic participation.

“Historic levels of Government funding are being committed to the crisis recovery, and we believe that new formal oversight beyond government is critical to ensure this funding reaches women

“A tripartite body to oversee all job-creation and wage subsidy programs and ensure that the investment of tax payers’ money results in as many jobs for women as men would be a good start for Government.

“The tax cuts will entrench inequality – with \$2.28 going to a man for every \$1 received by a woman.

“Leaving women behind weakens our economy and will lead to a longer, slower recovery. Investment which reduces inequality is also the fastest way to restart economic growth.

“This crisis presents us with an opportunity to create a more equal society, address systemic failures and ensure that public investment is improving our society, not entrenching inequality.”

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