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## Working mums doing it tough deserve a decent paid parental scheme by start of 2011

Working mothers will today (Friday) give evidence to a Senate inquiry about the personal and financial stress caused by having to return to work soon after the birth of a child because they were not entitled to paid parental leave.

Ilana Crawford, who will appear before the Senate Inquiry into the Paid Parental Leave Bill today, says her experience as a new mum was unhappy and stressful when she was called back to work just three months after her son was born.

"I felt I had no choice. I wasn't ready to go back, I was still recovering from a difficult birth and my son was very unsettled, not feeding properly," Ms Crawford said.

"But I felt if I didn't go back I would lose my job altogether."

She said the financial stress became unmanageable when her husband was retrenched during the Global Financial Crisis, so she returned to work full time.

"By the time my son was 12 months old, I was so burned out, I had to take stress leave," the Sydney mother said.

ACTU President Sharan Burrow said Ilana Crawford's story is all too common:

"Unfortunately there are thousands of families experiencing the same financial and emotional pressures as Ilana," Ms Burrow said.

"A fully operational, paid parental scheme must be in place by the start of 2011 to support Australian families.

"We call on Tony Abbott's Coalition and the Greens and independent Senators to ensure that the Senate does not block the scheme."

The Paid Parental Leave Bill, introduced into the Federal Parliament this week, is expected to be voted on by the Senate before Parliament rises for the winter break.

### Media doorstop

**Working mothers Ilana Crawford and Sariah Giblin with ACTU President Sharan Burrow.**

**10.10am Senate Courtyard, Friday 14 May**

**Ms Crawford, Ms Giblin and Ms Burrow will be giving evidence to the Senate Inquiry into the Paid Parental Leave Bill from 9am - 10am, Committee Room 2S3**

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