

Friday 25 November 2022

## Albanese Government follows through on commitment to Respect@Work

The ACTU welcomes the passage of the Respect@Work Bill, which enacts several of the key recommendations of the Respect@Work report which were ignored by the previous Government.

The Bill makes significant changes which will make Australian workplaces safer for women, including:

- New provisions that prohibit conduct that subjects another person to a workplace environment that is hostile on the grounds of sex,
- The introduction of a positive duty in the Sexual Discrimination Act on all employers to take reasonable and proportionate measures to eliminate sex discrimination, sexual harassment and sex-based harassment, hostile environments and victimisation at work,
- New provisions in the Australian Human Rights Commission Act which enable the Australian Human Rights Commission to monitor and assess compliance with the positive duty and also gives AHRC enforcement powers for the first time,
- New provisions in the AHRC Act to provide the AHRC with a broad inquiry function to inquire into systemic unlawful discrimination or suspected systemic unlawful discrimination,
- Amendments to the AHRC Act that enable representative bodies such as unions to make representative applications on behalf of people who have experienced unlawful discrimination in the federal courts,
- Amendments to the Workplace Gender Equality Act to require the Commonwealth public sector to report to WGEA.

### Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O'Neil:

“We congratulate the Albanese Government and Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus on taking action which will make workplaces across the country safer for women.

“These reforms were ignored by the previous Government who repeatedly failed to act to address the mistreatment of women in workplaces including their own.

“All parliamentarians who voted to support these changes have been part of a significant step forward for women in work in this country.”

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