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Hanson's attack on family violence leave shockingly out of touch

Australian Unions say that One Nation Leader, Pauline Hanson's attack on paid family and domestic violence leave shows her lack of respect for the risks and hardship survivors of family violence encounter.

The One Nation leader has described paid family and domestic violence leave as "domestic violence holiday leave," and questioned whether it was "a scam."

Ms Hanson told a podcast interviewer she was totally against domestic violence leave because it was "an incentive to actually go out there and make false accusations."

Following years of campaigning by unions, the Albanese Government introduced paid family and domestic violence leave for Australian workers in 2023 to support survivors who often faced the impossible choice of keeping themselves and their children safe or keeping their jobs.

Thousands of workers have used the leave to meet with police, attend court hearings, secure emergency accommodation, organise school and care arrangements for children, access support services and implement safety plans after fleeing violent relationships.

Quotes attributable to ACTU President, Michele O'Neil:

"Pauline Hanson's comments are reckless and dangerous - access to paid family and domestic violence leave has literally saved lives. Nobody wants to be in a position where they need to use this leave, but for those who have no choice, paid family and domestic violence leave is an essential lifeline.

"People who experience family and domestic violence are not on a holiday, far from it. The leave allows them to get to court, meet police, find emergency accommodation, and put safety arrangements in place for themselves and their children.

"All the experts tell us that leaving a violent relationship is the most dangerous time in a person's life. Pauline Hanson needs to be reminded that on average, a woman is killed every nine days by a current or former partner in Australia. One Nation is wrong, and unions will not allow attacks on this hard-won leave to stand.

"Unions campaigned and won paid family and domestic violence leave because survivors told us they needed the time, so they didn't have to choose between going to work to put food on the table or being able to make the break to safety.

"Dealing with a violent relationship costs time and money and can tragically trap workers in dangerous situations. Access to paid family and domestic violence leave saves lives, and women have come forward and credited this leave as having been essential to surviving and getting back on their feet.

"If you actually care about working Australians, you don't attack the measures that keep them safe, that keep their jobs and support their families while they face some of the toughest circumstances imaginable, yet that is what One Nation is doing."

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