

## **Big Budget for Australian Women**

26 October 2022

The Treasurer has said that darker days are in front of us and that all Australians need to pull together. For the first time the Budget published an 85 page Women's Budget Statement, the first ever and covered a wide range of issues in detail. The Statement can be found here:

[Women's Budget Statement](#)

### **Women are moving up but a long way to go**

The 2022-2023 Budget came out swinging for Australian women from making childcare more affordable, reducing the gender pay gap, TAFE courses for teenage children affordable or free, 26 weeks of paid parental leave and spending big on the reduction of domestic violence under the big tent of improving Australian women's lives.

Although a long way to go it is heartening to see that the majority of judges on the High Court are women. The impact of High Court decisions across all Australian groups, industry, business and wellbeing is crucial and to have a majority female judges on the top court of the land is a great step towards equality.

### **Female participation in the workforce is vital**

Australian unemployment is low and many businesses are faltering without enough 'hands on deck'. The Treasurer has dedicated \$4.7Bn to be spent over 4 years to make child care more affordable to increase work force participation. Together with the increase in immigration and 26 week paid parental leave it is crucial for Australian success in times of global recession to provide incentives for women to get to work. *With high inflation eating into the family budget, the only way out is to increase the amount of money coming into the family to stay ahead. All hands on deck for the family and Australia!*

### **Important unseen Budget issues for Women**

Some important issues that are not found in the Women's Budget Statement but are highly important to women is the \$4,000 increase in the income threshold to be earned by women

receiving the aged pension. Keeping older women in the workforce earning up to \$11,000 income while still receiving the full aged pension ensures that we hold onto women who often have front facing and back office roles – so important for small and medium business.

And one area that the Government should be highly praised for is the promise of 480,000 fee-free TAFE places and a \$50 million TAFE Technology Fund to modernise TAFEs. This provides mothers with children a pathway to learn from home, whether brushing up on existing skills or learning skills for a new career. And as their children get older a TAFE education, paid for by the government will provide children with a much needed trade or career, thereby increasing the underlying net income of the family household.

There may be hard times ahead but with the Government providing incentives for an increase in the workforce participation rate for women plus the closing of the gender equality gap means that we will have the best chance of staring down a recession.