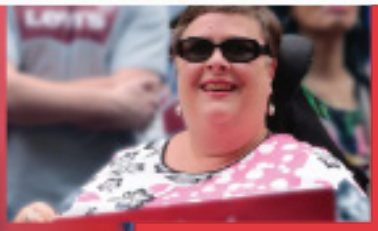
WOMEN'S BUDGET STATEMENT 2019



Labor

This publication was written and printed on the land of the Ngunnawal People of the Canberra Region.

We pay our respect to elders past and present, and recognise them as the custodians of the land.

FOREWORD

If Labor is fortunate enough to win the next election, we're on track to become the first Federal Government in Australia's history where 50 per cent of our representatives are women.

That doesn't just happen – it takes hard work, commitment and cultural change.

Having more women around the decision-making table makes a difference.

Labor has spent the past six years developing the most comprehensive set of gender equality policies ever taken to an election by an Opposition. We've held national *Setting the Agenda* consultations, spoken to experts and participated in discussions to hear from thousands of women around Australia.

We did this because equality is at the heart of Labor's mission.

A Shorten Labor Government will lead a national push to help close the gender pay gap and give Australian women a fair go at work.

We've committed over $2.6 billion over ten years to boost women's superannuation. We'll pay super on paid parental leave for the first time because Australian women told us they were worried about poverty in retirement and were sick of being penalised for parenting.

We will invest in violence prevention and frontline services to finally push down rates of violence against women.

We'll deliver a ground breaking reproductive choice policy that will deliver access to safe, legal, affordable reproductive health services around the country.

This year our Women's Budget Statement focuses on how Labor's taxation and revenue policies, our workplace policies and our investments in health, housing, education and families will all work for Australian women.

Just some of the policies Labor will deliver for Australian women are covered in this statement. Labor's full set of gender equality policies will be released during the election.

TANYA PLIBERSEK
Deputy Leader of the Opposition
Shadow Minister for Women

Tanya Plibersek

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If we can be the first nation to achieve true equality for women, then we will be the richest and most successful country in the world, bar none. To achieve this we need to see real change in attitudes, culture and respect, in economic security, fair wages and a secure retirement, in education, health and safety from violence, and in the decision-making bodies of our nation. **This is exactly why a Shorten Labor Government will make true equality for women a national priority.**

BILL SHORTEN
Leader of the Opposition

The Women's Budget Statement is a critical tool in the Budget process not only to achieve equality but to make the right economic decisions for the country. A **Women's Budget Statement will ensure Budgets under a Shorten Labor Government are fair for women,** provide future generations with equal opportunity, and ensure that more women can retire with dignity.

CHRIS BOWEN
Shadow Treasurer

Labor shouldn't rest until Australia is again leading the world on gender equality. **Ensuring that our workplaces, parliaments, education and health services are all working for Australian women is central to this mission.** That's why Labor's commitment to ensure that gender equality is placed at the centre of government decision-making is so important.

SHARON CLAYDON
Chair, Labor's Status of Women Caucus Committee

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THE 2019 BUDGET

The Treasurer tried to lock women's groups out of the 2019 Budget Lock Up because they were told they weren't "relevant."

The 2019 Budget has no new measures for women – it just recycles old announcements. After six years of cuts and chaos, this Budget is filled with the same inaction on issues that matter for women.

There's nothing the Liberals can say in the next six weeks to fix what they haven't done in the last six years.

The Government's projected return to surplus is built on underspending on the National Disability Insurance Scheme caused by six years of neglecting the scheme and botching its roll-out – harming people with disability and their carers, most of whom are women.

The Budget Papers show the Liberals have neglected Australians earning less than $40,000 a year in their tax cuts – that's 2.9 million taxpayers – who will pay more tax under the Liberals than under Labor's original proposal announced last year. 57 per cent of these taxpayers are women. Many will be mums working part time.

Instead of investing in permanent funding for preschool for four year olds and extending universal access to preschool to three year olds as Labor has committed to, the Government has continued uncertainty by only providing one year of stop-gap funding. This leaves 350,000 families in limbo in the face of overwhelming evidence that two years of quality early education is the best way to prepare our kids for school.

The Budget locks in $3 billion in cuts to TAFE. The promised 80,000 new apprenticeship places come nowhere close to addressing the 150,000 place decline in apprenticeships or 25 per cent drop in TAFE enrolments on the Liberals' watch. Women have suffered most from the Government's harsh cuts to vocational education – the number of women enrolling in trade apprenticeships has dropped by 40 per cent under the Liberals – twice the rate of decline for men.

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> The 2019 Budget has no new measures for women – it just recycles old announcements. After six years of cuts and chaos, this Budget is filled with the same inaction on issues that matter for women.

What's missing? The Budget contains no mentions of affordable housing – even though women currently make up 66 per cent of turn-aways from homelessness services and older single women are one of the fastest growing groups falling into homelessness.

There is not a single policy to address the gender pay gap and no plan for wages.

And the Liberals have not backed Labor's commitment to a National Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy.

Labor welcomes the Government's commitment to women's sport, which builds on $95 million already announced by Labor. We are waiting for a transparent breakdown of how much of the $190 million funding is actually for women's change-rooms.

The Budget also highlights the Government's lack of funding for women's economic security. After months of promises and delays, the Liberal's November economic security statement delivered just $119 million. Worse, the Liberals have failed to take any action to legislate key measures in the package, including amendments to paid parental leave access, and it's unclear how much, if any, of the funding has actually been delivered.

The Budget also fails to deliver on repeated calls by the women's sector to further boost funding for frontline domestic violence services to meet demand. The new funding mechanism for legal assistance largely continues existing levels of funding and makes no effort to address spiralling demand for legal assistance for women and children escaping violence.

After six years sliding down global gender equality rankings, visionary change is needed. The Morrison Government isn't going to deliver it.

Labor

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

Gender equity is not a priority for the Liberals – you only have to look at their own party to see that.

After the Liberals came to power, Australia slipped from 19th to 46th place in the Global Gender Gap Report.

The Liberals have repeatedly delivered Budgets that didn't contain a single measure to directly address women's long term and structural economic disadvantage.

In the last six years the Liberal Government has:

- Appointed Tony Abbott as the Minister for Women and cancelled the annual Women's Budget Statement
- Tried five times to slash paid parental leave, calling mothers "rorters", "double dippers" and "fraudsters."
- Tried to cut around $35 million from Community Legal Centres that provide crucial legal services to people experiencing family violence.
- Tried to force through changes to the law that would effectively abolish the Family Court of Australia – leaving women and children in need without a superior court to rule on their cases.
- Cut $44 million a year to capital funding used to build safe housing options for women and children fleeing family violence.
- Cut health care and university funding disproportionately harminf women.
- Delivered a women's economic security statement that ignored the gender pay gap.
- Supported cuts to penalty rates and argued against minimum wage increases that disproportionately impact women's pay.
- Prevented around 30 public service departments from providing paid family violence leave to their employees and described it as a cost to business that will "make women less attractive to employers."
- Introduced the ParentsNext program that was supposed to help single parents but has instead penalised thousands of single mothers, causing great distress and putting children at risk of hunger.
- Introduced changes to child care subsidies that leave one in four families worse off.
- Slashed investment in family planning through Australia's international development program by a third and said Labor's ground-breaking reproductive health strategy "isn't good for our country."
- Refused to sign up to the 2019 United Nations International Women's Day Statement supported by 57 countries, including the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Japan.

Labor

LABOR'S RECORD

Labor has spent the past six years trying to protect Australians from the worst of the Liberals' cuts and pushing for important reforms.

- Labor forced the Government to backflip and provide one-off support for power bills to Newstart recipients.
- Thanks to Labor, the Liberals were forced to abandon the worst of their hospital cuts.
- When Labor announced we would axe the tampon tax, Scott Morrison dismissed it as a "cynical exercise". But after six months of pressure, he backpedalled and committed to match Labor's plan.
- Labor helped ensure that breast cancer treatment would not be confined to the highest tier private health insurance policies. If the Liberals' plan had gone ahead, women would have been forced to pay for the most expensive policies just to have this all too common treatment covered.
- Labor successfully blocked cuts to income support that would have seen young job seekers forced to wait six months before receiving assistance; blocked changes to pension indexation that would have left pensioners $80 a week worse off; and opposed plans to cut the Energy Supplement and raise the pension age to 70.
- Labor blocked the Liberals' attempts to slash paid parental leave - the scheme we designed and introduced in 2009.
- Labor forced the Government to reverse its cuts to Community Legal Centres.
- Labor has worked with the Senate cross-bench to make sure radical changes to the Family Court did not pass – this week the Government finally admitted defeat.
- Labor led the debate on reforms to prevent alleged perpetrators of domestic violence cross-examining their victims, and eventually the Government adopted our policy.
- We led the charge on the campaign to criminalise image-based abuse.
- We pressured the Government to restore funding for the Keeping Women Safe in Their Homes program.
- We forced the Government to commit to funding the Time Use Survey.
- We pushed for the establishment of a royal commission into violence, abuse and neglect of people with disability, while the Liberals voted against it twice.
- We pushed for the establishment of a Banking Royal Commission.

Labor

WHY **WOMEN'S BUDGETS** MATTER

Budgets matter for women. The choices governments make about taxes, spending and saving are not gender neutral.

The Budget is a map of the priorities of the government of the day and the Liberal Party has spent the past six years trying to hide where Australian women fall on their map.

Australia was the first country in the world to produce a Women's Budget Statement under the Hawke Labor Government in 1984.

The idea was to be transparent about how the decisions made in the Budget impact Australian women. This continued for thirty years until Prime Minister Abbott – then the Minister for Women – scrapped the process in his horror 2014 Budget to try to hide the impact of his cuts on women.

Labor

A Shorten Labor Government will change this by:

Strengthening the role of the Office for Women

Labor will place the Office for Women at the centre of a new program of gender responsive policy-making. The Office for Women will form a hub of technical expertise and will provide oversight of all policies that impact on the social and economic wellbeing and participation of Australian women.

A gender lens on policy

Labor will introduce gender impact assessment on cabinet submissions and new policy proposals - as we have been doing in Opposition.

Gender responsive budgeting

Labor will bring back the annual Women's Budget Statement to assess the impact of new budget measures on women and examine how the allocation of public resources affects gender equality.

Working with the APS

Federal government departments will be required to set and report on gender indicators across all areas of government. The Office for Women will work with the Secretaries' Equality and Diversity Council to ensure that all public service leaders' key performance indicators specifically include diversity.

Measuring and reporting on progress

Labor will report on progress against our gender equality targets and indicators through an annual update to Parliament. This will provide greater transparency about the impact of government policies and budgets on women.

National collaboration and cooperation

Labor will reconvene a Ministerial Council on Gender Equality with relevant Ministers in state and territory governments. The Ministerial Council will include an annual meeting with the forum of National Women's Alliances.

Meet Australia's international responsibilities

Labor will align our gender equality reporting with "Sustainable Development Goal 5: Gender Equality", participate in the UN Committee for the Status of Women, and continue to meet our responsibilities across international forums.

Labor

TAXATION AND REVENUE

LABOR'S PLAN

Labor is committed to restoring integrity in our taxation system by closing tax loopholes, ending unfair tax concessions and delivering better tax cuts for working Australians. Income tax cuts under Labor will be the same as the Liberals' for taxpayers earning between $40,000 and $125,000, but bigger for people earning less than $40,000 a year. We will:

- Close down a tax concession that gives cash refunds for excess dividend imputation credits – a concession which has grown at a rapid rate and will soon grow to cost the taxpayer more than what we spend on public schools per year.
- Reform negative gearing and capital gains tax discounts to ensure our tax system is fair and sustainable.
- Deliver a package of measures to close tax loopholes exploited by multinational companies, restore integrity to the Australian tax system, and stop Australian profits being stashed away in tax havens.
- Fix the Liberals' income tax cuts so that Australians earning less than $40,000 will receive better tax cuts.

Labor

IMPACT ON WOMEN

The Liberals have a record of delivering budgets that give tax cuts that predominantly benefit men on high incomes and cuts that disproportionately disadvantage women.

Analysis of the cuts in the Government's horror 2014 Budget showed women bore 55 per cent of the impact.

Analysis of the income tax cuts in the Government's 2018 Budget showed men got twice the benefit compared to women. This built on men receiving three quarters of the benefits of tax breaks delivered in the 2017 Budget.

Labor's measures to close tax loopholes and end unfair tax concessions will ensure Labor is able to invest more in health, education, affordable housing, early childhood education and care, and women's safety, all while delivering a healthier Budget bottom line.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

The Government tried to give big businesses an $80 billion tax cut.

They also tried to raise everyone's income taxes through a hike in the Medicare Levy.

The Government took nearly a year to match Labor's bigger, better, fairer tax cuts for 10 million working Australians – but neglected to look after those earning $40,000 a year or less. 57 per cent of these taxpayers are women. Many will be mums working part time.

Labor

RETIREMENT INCOMES & **AGED CARE**

LABOR'S PLAN

A Shorten Labor Government will be committed to a fair and sustainable retirement income system and to growing superannuation to provide a comfortable retirement for all Australians. Labor is also committed to ensuring our superannuation system works better for women.

Labor will invest over $400 million to boost women's and low income earners' superannuation balances by:

- Paying the superannuation guarantee on Paid Parental Leave and Dad and Partner Pay payments from 1 July 2020.
- Phasing out the $450 per month minimum income threshold for eligibility for the superannuation guarantee from 1 July 2020.
- Making it easier for employers to pay extra superannuation to women.

Labor has also fought to protect retirement incomes and the aged pension from relentless attacks by the Liberal Government. We forced the Liberals to back down on their plan to scrap the Energy Supplement and raise the pension age to 70.

IMPACT ON WOMEN

Too many Australian women retire into poverty. On average, women retire with $113,000 less in their super than men – around 40 percent less.

This means that older women – particularly single women – are at a greater risk of experiencing poverty and homelessness in retirement. By the time they are 60, 34 per cent of single women in Australia live in poverty.

Labor's commitment to pay superannuation on paid parental leave will mean parents won't be penalised for taking time out of work to have children. Labor's policy will benefit almost 170,000 parents who receive Commonwealth Parental Leave Pay - mostly women - and 80,000 recipients of Dad and Partner Pay payments in 2020-21.

Increased workforce casualisation is making it harder for low income women who work a number of casual jobs to build retirement savings, because their earnings in each job can be below the income threshold for employer superannuation contributions to be made – Labor will fix this by phasing out the $450 minimum monthly income threshold for eligibility for the superannuation guarantee.

Meanwhile, there are now 128,000 older Australians waiting for a homecare package and too many are passing away while waiting for care. Two out of three people accessing aged care services are women.

Labor

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

The Liberal Government has spent the past six years attacking retirement incomes. Labor has fought the Liberals' cuts to the pension at every turn. The Liberals have:

- Tried to cut pension indexation in 2014 and slashed $1 billion from pensioner concessions in the same Budget.
- Attempted to cut pension indexation, which would have left pensioners $80 a week worse off within a decade.
- Cut the pension asset test in 2015, causing around 370,000 pensioners to lose up to $12,000 a year and 100,000 to lose their pension altogether.
- Attempted to scrap the Energy Supplement, which would have cut the Age Pension for 1.5 million pensioners over 10 years.
- Tried to raise the pension age to 70.

The Government has tried to cut the pension in every single Budget. And they still are: with plans to cut the Pension Supplement when people visit family overseas for more than six weeks, and plans to increase the waiting period for migrant pensions from 10 to 15 years.

There is nothing new in aged care services in this Budget – the Budget does not deliver one new home care package the Government hasn't already announced.

The Liberals slashed Labor's Low Income Superannuation Contribution – two thirds of the people accessing the LISC were women – then there was such a backlash they were forced to bring it back under a new name – the Low Income Superannuation Tax Offset.

Even when the Liberals say they're trying to help women, they end up funnelling tax concessions to men on high incomes. The Liberals describe their "catch up payments" policy (the roll-over of concessional superannuation contributions) as one that particularly benefits women. But the evidence just doesn't stack up. Analysis by Industry Super Australia suggests that men are almost twice as likely to benefit from catch-up contributions as women. And most people who benefit are already among the top 20 per cent of income earners.

Labor

SUPPORT FOR **FAMILIES**

LABOR'S PLAN

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Labor is committed to policies that work for Australian families and we have fought hard against the Liberals' attempts to slash support to families. Labor will:

- Invest $1.75 billion in a National Preschools and Kindy program to commit permanent funding to preschool for all four year olds and extend the program to all three year olds. This will provide every child with subsidised access to 15 hours of early education a week in the two years before they start school.
- Overhaul the ParentsNext program and put in place a new approach that will put the interests of children first and end damaging rules that hurt parents and penalise children.
- Pay superannuation for parents receiving Commonwealth parental leave pay for the first time.
- Deliver a Family Engagement and Support Strategy for Defence Personnel and Veterans.
- Invest $6.1 million to upgrade and expand community toy libraries and playgrounds.

Labor

IMPACT ON WOMEN

Women still take on a disproportionate share of family and caring responsibilities in Australian households. Australian women do almost twice as much unpaid housework and caring work as men and women's careers are disproportionately affected by pregnancy and caring responsibilities.

Liberal policies, including attempts to cut paid parental leave and the expansion of the punitive ParentsNext program have disproportionately impacted women.

Participants in the ParentsNext program are overwhelmingly single mothers. A recent Senate Inquiry, initiated by Labor, found the program causes parents and children great distress and led to one in five participants having their payments suspended.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

Australian families have been continually attacked by the Liberal Government. Despite promising a "rolled gold" parental leave scheme, the Government instead tried eight times to slash paid parental leave, accusing mothers of being "rorters" and "fraudsters".

The Government has made multiple attempts to cut family tax benefits and held its changes to child care subsidies hostage to Family Tax Benefit cuts.

When the Liberals did launch their new childcare system, they left 279,000 families worse off – that's one in four Australian families. The new arrangements cut in half support for the early education of some of Australia's most vulnerable children.

The Government continues to provide only stop-gap temporary funding for the national preschools program, and funding expires next year– leaving 350,000 families who rely on this program in limbo.

WOMEN'S HEALTH PRIORITIES

Women will benefit from Labor's major investments to improve our health care system, but women also have specific health care needs that are being ignored by the Liberal Government. Labor is committed to:

- Deliver Australia's first ever National Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy to make sure all Australian women can access legal, safe, affordable reproductive health services.
- Invest **$9.3 million** for a national telephone referral service and a new online community of practice so GPs and pharmacists who provide medical terminations can access peer support and advice.
- Use Commonwealth funding agreements to make sure all women can access termination services in public hospitals.
- Review Medicare rebates associated with medical terminations to address access and affordability issues.
- Establish a new **$1 million** Tasmanian Reproductive Health Hub so women aren't forced to travel interstate to have a termination.
- Invest **$5 million** in driving down Australia's stillbirth rate, helping to educate women on what they can do to avoid this heartbreak, as well as funding research programs.
- Invest an extra **$47 million** in Medicare to subsidise breast cancer MRIs to ensure Australian women get the care they need when they need it.
- Boost research into advanced breast cancer and brain cancer with a **$20 million** investment in the Olivia Newton-John Cancer Research Institute.
- Provide **$12 million** towards Ovarian Cancer Australia's National Action Plan for Ovarian Cancer Research, potentially preventing 2,500 cases of breast cancer and 800 cases of ovarian cancer.
- Raise public awareness of women's heart health by rolling out a life-saving education campaign across Australia, awarding community organisations with $10,000 each to help women reduce their risks.
- Restore **$1.1 million** in funding the Liberals slashed from the Australian Women's Health Network.
- Labor will also remove barriers to health care for LGBTIQ Australians.

Labor

HEALTH

LABOR'S PLAN

Labor believes that access to health care should depend on your Medicare card, not your credit card. That's why Labor will undo the damage of the last five years: we will restore funding to our hospitals; end the Medicare freeze; and get soaring out of pocket costs under control.

A Shorten Labor Government will:

- Invest $213 million to lift the six-year Liberal freeze on Medicare rebates within the first 50 days of government.
- Establish a $2.8 billion Better Hospitals Fund to reverse the Liberals' cuts to hospitals from the next election to 2025.
- Cap private health insurance premiums while working on long-term reforms to restore value and affordability.

IMPACT ON WOMEN

Women have disproportionately borne the burden of the Liberal Government's cuts to health care – in particular the Medicare freeze.

The majority of visits to the GP are made by women, either for themselves (60 per cent) or with their children (another 11 per cent). In 2015-16, Australian women and girls claimed over 220 million Medicare services, an average of 18 Medicare services each. By comparison, men and boys claimed 13 Medicare services each.

Under the Liberals, out-of-pocket GP costs have increased by 25 per cent, specialist costs by almost 40 per cent and private health insurance premiums by 30 per cent.

1.3 million Australians skip getting basic health care because of cost – and we know that women are more likely to be living in poverty and are more likely than men to delay seeing a doctor because of cost pressures.

Women face a range of specific health challenges not faced by men – including maternal and reproductive health issues. Too many Australian women have to travel interstate because they don't have access to safe, legal, affordable termination services. Labor's ground-breaking National Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy will aim to reduce unplanned pregnancies and ensure all Australian women can access safe, legal and affordable termination services.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

The Liberal Government has an appalling record on health. Their Medicare freeze has ripped $3 billion out of Medicare.

It's been in place for five years – and it's only now, on the eve of an election, that they're proposing to match Labor's commitment to end it.

The Liberals have also ripped $715 million out of Commonwealth hospital funding under its current agreement – and now it is trying to lock in a further $2.8 billion worth of public hospital cuts.

Emergency departments are struggling with rising demand, with only 66 per cent of patients needing urgent care being seen within the recommended 30 minutes. Under the Liberals, elective surgery waiting times are they worst they've been since records began.

Finally, the Government has refused to support improved reproductive health services, saying that the debate about women's access to basic health care needs "isn't good for our country."

Labor has succeeded in blocking many of the Liberal's worst proposals: to cut $57 billion from hospitals; the GP co-payment; forcing up the cost of medicines; and cutting dental care for children.

EDUCATION PRIORITIES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

Labor will also tackle the disadvantages women face in accessing quality education by:

- Reserving half of Labor's 100,000 fee free TAFE places for women.
- Scrapping upfront fees for 10,000 early education students studying at TAFE – around 96 per cent of early childhood educators are women.
- Establishing an independent Safe Campus Taskforce to ensure universities and residential colleges are providing a safe environment for their students, free of sexual assault and harassment.
- Investing an extra $19.5 million in programs to provide intensive in-school mentoring for thousands of First Nations girls and young women.
- Establishing a new Apprenticeship Advocate to develop strategies to improve women's access to and completion of quality apprenticeships.

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LABOR'S PLAN

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Labor knows the key to a more prosperous and equitable society is a high-quality, affordable education system from early education to life-long learning.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Labor's $1.75 billion national preschools and kindy program will help expand access to quality early learning for all Australian children. Labor will:

- Commit permanent funding to the national preschool and kindy program for all four year olds and extend the program to cover all three year olds.
- Ensure early learning centres are high quality and safe by restoring the $20 million safety and quality funding the Liberal Government has cut.
- Ensure the people who educate and care for our children are properly paid.

SCHOOLS

A Shorten Labor Government will deliver the biggest investment in public schools in Australian history, so every child gets the fair go they deserve. Labor will:

- Provide an extra $14.1 billion in funding for public schools (restoring every dollar the Liberals have cut) over a decade to boost overall Commonwealth funding for public schools to a record $133 billion. Around $3.3 billion will be provided over the first three school years alone.
- Match funding the Liberals have pledged to Catholic and Independent schools.
- Provide an extra $300 million for students with a disability.

TAFE + APPRENTICESHIPS

Labor will boost TAFE, apprenticeships and skills for Australians. Labor will:

- Scrap upfront fees for 100,000 TAFE students and guarantee at least two out of three vocational education dollars go to TAFE.
- Provide 10,000 pre-apprentice programs for young people who want to learn a trade and 20,000 adult apprentice programs for older workers who need to retrain.
- Invest $100 million in modernising TAFE facilities around the country and ensure one in every ten jobs on Commonwealth priority projects are filled by Australian apprentices and trainees.

UNIVERSITIES

Labor will undo the damage the Liberals have done to Australia's higher education system. We will:

- Uncap university places – ensuring around 200,000 more Australians will get access to a university education over the next decade.
- Provide support for disadvantaged and underrepresented Australians to get a place at university through our new $174 million University Pathway Fund.
- Create a $300 million University Future Fund for higher education infrastructure and priorities.

IMPACT ON WOMEN

Australia is ranked first in the world for gender equity in education. Over 55 per cent of students at Australian universities are women, and girls perform well in national schools testing. But there is significant gender segregation in our education system that feeds into workforce segregation and pay disparity.

The drop in the number of apprentices and trainees in training under the Liberals has hit women hardest – there are 28 per cent fewer male apprentices and trainees and 42 per cent fewer women. The number of women commencing a trade apprenticeship has dropped by 40 per cent, while commencements for men have dropped by 22 percent.

Because of reforms when Labor was last in government, more women are accessing higher education than ever before. However, pay inequity and time spent out of the workforce because of caring responsibilities mean women are often slower at repaying their HELP debts – accumulating more interest and ultimately paying a higher cost for their degrees.

Analysis from the NTEU and ACTU from 2017 shows 60 per cent of all outstanding HELP debts belong to women and two thirds of the people impacted by the Liberals' 2016 changes to repayment rates were women.

The Australian Human Rights Commission's survey of sexual harassment and assault on campus found that women are twice as likely to be harassed on campus and three times as likely to be sexually assaulted. Labor's Safe Campus Taskforce will force universities and residential colleges to take action to drive down rates of assault and harassment on campus.

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THE LIBERALS' RECORD

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The Government continues to only provide stop-gap temporary funding for the national preschools program. Funding runs out next year, leaving 350,000 families in limbo.

SCHOOLS

The Liberals have reversed their cuts to private schools but not to public schools – leaving public schools over $14 billion out of pocket. That's not fair.

Under Scott Morrison, nine in ten public schools will never get to their fair funding level because the Liberals have capped federal funding for public schools at just 20 per cent of the cost of educating a child.

TAFE + APPRENTICESHIPS

This Budget locks in more than $3 billion the Liberals have cut from TAFE, skills and apprenticeships.

Australia now has 150,000 fewer apprentices and trainees than it did when the Liberals were elected and TAFE enrolments have dropped by 24.5 per cent on their watch. In too many towns and regional centres across Australia, TAFE campuses have closed, courses have been scaled back and fees have increased.

The Budget confirms the Government's ever diminishing Skilling Australians Fund has been cut by a further $649 million. The 300,000 projected apprenticeships and trainees the fund was originally slated to deliver has now been cut to just 80,000. This doesn't even come close to reversing the damage the Liberals have done.

UNIVERSITIES

After years of trying to cut uni funding and introduce $100,000 degrees, the Liberals had to bypass Parliament to make cuts. In 2017, the Liberals cut $2.2 billion from our universities by freezing undergraduate places for 2018 and 2019 and capping growth from 2020.

CLOSING THE GENDER PAY GAP

A Shorten Labor Government will lead a national push to help close the gender pay gap and deliver a fair go for Australian women. Labor will:

- Strengthen the ability of the Fair Work Commission to order pay increases for workers in undervalued female-dominated industries such as early childhood, aged care, and disability services.
- Make pay equity a central objective of the Fair Work Act and establish a statutory Equal Remuneration Principle.
- Set up an expert Pay Equity Panel in the Fair Work Commission, supported by a Pay Equity Unit.
- Require large companies to publish their gender pay gaps for the first time.
- Ban pay secrecy clauses so workers have the right to disclose (or not disclose) their pay.
- Require all Australian government departments and agencies to conduct a gender pay audit within the first year of government.

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WOMEN AND **WORK**

LABOR'S PLAN

A Shorten Labor Government will reverse cuts to penalty rates, boost wages for workers and increase the minimum wage – fixing the law so that the Fair Work Commission has the tools to deliver a living wage for Australia's low-paid workers.

Labor has committed to measures to address stagnant wages and job insecurity, including legislating an objective definition for determining when a worker can be required to work as a casual; introducing a national labour hire licensing scheme; requiring people working for a labour hire company to receive the same pay as a permanent employee they work alongside; and cracking down on sham independent contracting.

Labor will also improve wages by improving the balance in bargaining, including by preventing companies from terminating enterprise agreements, and preventing companies from entering into sham enterprise agreements.

IMPACT ON WOMEN

Protecting women's rights at work is crucial to advancing gender equality. The Fair Work Commission has stated that women are disproportionately represented among low paid workers. Women are also more likely to be award reliant, in casual work and insecure jobs.

Women are disproportionately impacted by cuts to penalty rates as they are more likely to work in affected industries, be part-time employed under an award and work weekends.

Women make up the majority of the hospitality, retail, fast food, and pharmacy workforces impacted by the cuts. Under a Liberal Government, from 1 July this year, penalty rates will be cut again, further reducing workers' take home pay.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

The Morrison Government has argued against a decent increase to the minimum wage, voted eight times to support cuts to penalty rates, legislated to stop workers and employers agreeing to limit labour hire, voted against Labor's proposals to make big business liable for underpayment of workers along the supply chain, and encouraged employers to terminate enterprise agreements – undermining collective bargaining.

Record low wages growth has been a hallmark of this Government – the Liberals have presided over the weakest period of wages growth on record. Wages growth under the Liberals has been weaker every year than any year before they were elected.

Adding insult to injury, Liberal Ministers are boasting that low wages are a "deliberate design feature" of the Liberals' and Nationals' economic strategy.

As a result of the Morrison Government's failure to support Labor's legislation to protect penalty rates, low-paid workers who had Sunday and public holiday penalty rates cut stand to lose up to $77 per week.

This Budget has no plan for wages and downgrades wage forecasts again.

Labor

HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

LABOR'S PLAN

Australia is in the midst of a housing affordability and homelessness crisis – our housing system simply isn't delivering for Australians.

A Shorten Labor Government will make the largest investment in housing supply since the Second World War – building 250,000 new affordable rental homes over the next decade in partnership with the community housing sector, with an investment of $6.6 billion over a decade.

Labor will restore national leadership through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) by developing and implementing a plan to reduce homelessness that will take into account the gendered determinants of homelessness.

Labor will also invest $88 million over two years in a new Safe Housing Fund to increase housing options. The Safe Housing Fund will provide capital funds to build new crisis and transitional housing to assist women and children escaping domestic and family violence, young people exiting out-of-home care and older women who are at risk of homelessness.

IMPACT ON WOMEN

Women are more likely than men to experience unaffordable, insecure and inappropriate housing, or to be at-risk of or experience homelessness. Older single women and women who have experienced family violence are at a particularly high risk of homelessness.

The Government's failure to address the crisis in housing affordability and homelessness has led to a significant deterioration across the full range of housing indicators for women. There have been significant declines in rates of home-ownership, record rates of rental and mortgage stress, and increasing reliance on housing assistance and services.

The situation is even more severe for women renting on low incomes in the private rental market, or who are reliant on the social housing system. Over 60 per cent of the single people who are still in housing stress despite receiving Commonwealth Rent Assistance are women.

Labor's historic commitment to affordable rental housing, our $88 million investment in crisis and transitional housing and our gender-aware plan to reduce homelessness will be a game-changer for Australian women.

Labor's last rental affordability scheme successfully delivered long-term, secure housing at below-market rents for women on low and moderate incomes. For example, more than 1 in 5 National Rental Affordability Scheme dwellings are occupied by sole parents – overwhelmingly women.

Labor

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

Under the Liberals we've seen rates of home ownership plummet to historic lows, record numbers of Australians in rental and mortgage stress, and increasing numbers of the most vulnerable people in our communities experiencing homelessness.

Their priority in housing is to maintain the world's most generous tax concessions for wealthy investors and property speculators at the expense of helping renters, first-home buyers and vulnerable Australians in need.

Since coming to office the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government has only made decisions that have worsened housing affordability and exacerbated homelessness. They have:

- Axed the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) that has provided more than 36,000 new affordable social housing units and was on track to achieve its target of 100,000 properties.
- Cut $44 million a year in capital funding for transitional housing options for women and children escaping domestic and family violence, young people exiting out-of-home care and older women on low incomes who are at risk of homelessness.
- Defunded peak advocacy bodies, including Homelessness Australia, National Shelter and the Community Housing Federation of Australia.

This Budget does nothing to address the affordable housing crisis.

Labor

WOMEN'S SAFETY

LABOR'S PLAN

A Shorten Labor Government will make preventing family violence and violence against women a national priority and will deliver practical support for women and children to leave family violence and help rebuild their lives.

In addition to supporting the $328 million allocated to domestic and family violence prevention in this Budget, Labor will:

- Legislate for 10 days paid domestic violence leave in the National Employment Standards.
- Deliver around 20,000 Flexible Support Packages to provide practical support to people escaping family violence, at a cost of $60 million.
- Invest $88 million into the Safe Housing fund to deliver more crisis and transitional housing, including for women and their children escaping family violence.
- Invest $13.6 million to overhaul Australia's response to forced marriage, including expanding access to Commonwealth support for victims of forced marriage and vulnerable people at risk of forced marriage.
- Build 250,000 new affordable homes, many of which will benefit people rebuilding their lives after leaving violent relationships.
- Immediately begin work on a new National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children and make preventing family violence a Council of Australian Governments priority.
- Reinstate a National Advisory Group, which the Liberals axed, to guide the development of a new National Plan.
- Create a new taskforce with strong powers to crack down on sexual harassment and assault at universities and residential colleges.

IMPACT ON WOMEN

Domestic and family violence disproportionately impacts women. One in six Australian women will experience physical or sexual violence by an intimate-partner in her lifetime.

The situation is worse for First Nations women who are 34 times more likely to be hospitalised because of domestic violence than non-Indigenous women.

Under the Liberals, funding for family and domestic violence services has failed to keep up with rising demand and more needs to be done to drive a nationally coordinated response.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

The Liberals:

- Scrapped the National Advisory Council which advised on the development of the National Action Plan.
- Remain opposed to legislating for 10 days paid domestic violence leave.
- Cut funding for safe housing and left legal aid and community legal services underfunded.
- Until Tuesday, the Liberal Government was also trying to merge the Federal Court and Family Court, effectively abolishing the Family Court as a superior court to deal with the most difficult matters for women and families in crisis.
- The Budget also calls into question the Government's funding commitment to the Fourth National Plan, with new spending for the measure listed as $275 million - $53 million less than the figure announced previously.

Labor

ACCESS TO **JUSTICE**

LABOR'S PLAN

Labor will ensure our justice system is safe, simple, affordable and accessible. Labor will:

- Work to strengthen funding to the four legal assistance services that provide vital legal advice and support for Australians in need: Legal Aid Commissions, Community Legal Centres, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services, and Family Violence Prevention Legal Services (FVPLSs).
- Remove the gag clauses imposed on these services that prohibit them from engaging in policy advocacy on law reform.
- Create 200 new community lawyer positions to provide free legal advice to Australians in disputes with their banks and financial services providers, a 500% increase in financial rights lawyers.
- Double the number of financial counsellors providing free financial support and advocacy to Australians in financial difficulty.

Labor

IMPACT ON WOMEN

Access to affordable legal assistance is often crucial to women escaping violent relationships. Community Legal Centres and FVPLSs offer specialist services for women suffering domestic violence, free of charge. This legal advice can be vital to women seeking to protect themselves and their children through legal means and escape violent relationships.

Financial rights legal centres also play an important role in advocating for women who are facing financial hardship, including those who have faced financial abuse, those who are being threatened with bankruptcy, those facing mounting credit card debts and those who are in danger of losing their family home.

Labor's funding boost to financial rights legal centres will allow an additional 150,000 Australians per year to access free legal advice and representation.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

The Liberals have treated the entire legal assistance sector with disdain through their six years in office.

The Liberals slashed funding to Community Legal Centres after coming to office, and back flipped on that decision three years later. There remains a growing level of unmet legal need, resulting in many thousands of Australians having to be turned away without help.

Funding in this year's Budget does little to address the spiralling demand for legal assistance services - it's little more than a continuation of existing funding.

Labor

FIRST NATIONS WOMEN

LABOR'S PLAN

A Shorten Labor Government will reset the relationship between government and First Nations people, including establishing a Voice for First Nations people.

We will work with First Nations people using the principles of co-design and free, prior and informed consent to repair the damage done through the Liberal Government's failed policies including the Community Development Program and the Indigenous Advancement Strategy.

We will revitalise the Close the Gap Framework, in partnership with First Nations peak bodies, and the states and territories.

Labor will deliver a number of significant policies that will heal past trauma and create more opportunity for First Nations people, including:

- Compensating members of the Stolen Generation.
- Establishing a national healing fund to support intergenerational healing.
- Introducing a representative body (The Voice) with co-designed legislation and constitutional reform, and a Makarrata Commission.
- Developing, in partnership with First Nations people, especially First Nations women, a National Strategy on First Nations' Children – to tackle First Nations child removal, incarceration, and family wellbeing.
- Doubling the number of Indigenous Rangers over five years, delivering more than 1,650 full time ranger jobs across Australia.
- Providing $19.5 million to expand First Nations girls and women's access to education programs.

IMPACT ON WOMEN

A Shorten Labor Government will introduce structures to ensure that regional communities have a direct voice in the policies and programs of Government. The principle of gender equality will be central in seeking representation from regional communities.

Labor's compensation for members of the Stolen Generation will be delivered with respect for the determined efforts of the mothers and grandmothers, who have held their families together despite the flawed policies and programs of the past.

Our commitment to a National Strategy on First Nations Children will be an important start to tackling the issues of child removal, incarceration and family wellbeing that are impacting First Nations women and their children.

We will work to support Indigenous women's education and employment through our $19.5 million commitment to First Nations Girls education programs and our commitment to double the number of Indigenous rangers.

First Nations women and girls are playing an increasing role in protecting Australia's natural and cultural values through the Indigenous Rangers program. The number of women rangers is currently around 35 percent of total ranger numbers. Labor's commitment will include a focus on increasing women ranger numbers and the number of women ranger groups.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

Since the election of the Coalition Government in 2013, much of the progress made under Labor has been unwound:

- The shift of the portfolio into PM&C has reduced the quality of service provision and policy development.
- The 2014 Budget slashed $500 million from Indigenous Affairs. Further cuts to health and education have had a substantial impact on First Nations People.
- The Community Development Program has pushed remote workers, families and communities into poverty.
- Constitutional recognition has stalled, with the government refusing to back the propositions put forward at Uluru.

Labor

DISABILITY AND CARERS

LABOR'S PLAN

Labor is the party that supports people with disability and a more inclusive society. We know that disability support does not begin and end with the NDIS. Labor will rectify the Government's failings by lifting the staffing cap on the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), but we need to continue to develop disability supports that go beyond the NDIS in the areas of disability employment, accommodation, advocacy and carer supports. Labor will:

- Work collaboratively with the disability community on development of a National Disability Strategy beyond the current 2020 end-point.
- Remove the workforce cap on the NDIA and adequately resource the organisation to deliver better outcomes.
- Nearly two years ago, in May 2017, Labor announced that in government, we will hold a Royal Commission into violence and abuse against people with disability. The Liberal Government has long rejected the idea of a Royal Commission – and voted against it twice in Parliament. However, after years of opposing a Royal Commission, the Government was recently shamed into action by the Parliament.
- Labor will deliver on the $528 million commitment to a Royal Commission that was announced in the Budget. Labor wants to see a broad-based inquiry that covers incidence of abuse and violence in a wide range of sectors and contexts, including in health, mental health, education and the justice system, and historic abuse.
- Labor believes the majority of Royal Commissioners should have lived experience of disability, and that an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person should also be among the commissioners.
- Labor recognises that carers have a right to a life outside, beyond and after their caring role and we introduced the Carer Recognition Act in 2010 to underscore this.
- Carers need short-term, long-term and emergency respite so they can have a break, enjoy a night of unbroken sleep and look after their own health and wellbeing needs.

Labor

IMPACT ON WOMEN

Around 240,000 more Australian women than men are living with some form of disability.

We know that women make up more than two thirds of primary carers (approximately 580,000 out of 856,000) in Australia and 55.5 per cent of all carers (1,499,000 out of 2,698,700).

Compared to their peers, women with disability experience significantly higher levels of all forms of violence more intensely and frequently and are subjected to such violence by a greater number of perpetrators. Their experiences of violence last over a longer period of time, and more severe injuries result from the violence.

Elderly single women living with disability are more likely to live in poverty than men living with disability.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

The Liberals' record delivering positive outcomes for Australians living with disability is appalling. They have imposed an arbitrary staffing cap on public sector agencies such as the NDIA which has restricted its ability to deliver effectively for people who use its services.

PROPPING UP THE BUDGET WITH THE NDIS UNDERSPEND

The Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government has shamefully built almost a quarter of their projected budget surplus on underspends in the NDIS.

Next year, Scott Morrison has counted a $1.6 billion underspend towards the budget bottom line.

This is a disgrace, not an achievement.

It's $1.6 billion in services and support that people with disability will miss out on because the Government has botched the NDIS rollout at every turn.

It comes on top of a shocking $3.4 billion underspend in the 2018-19 financial year, and over $6 billion to date.

This is a direct result of delays in the NDIS rollout – with over 77,000 people missing out on the NDIS this year alone.

And it is a consequence of people being unable to use their plans because services and support are simply not available.

The NDIS has fallen into crisis under this Government.

People are getting poor quality plans; they are not being treated with respect; services are being pushed to the brink; and waiting times are completely unacceptable.

Labor will put the NDIS back on track – by lifting the staffing cap and putting people back at the heart of the NDIS.

Labor

MIGRATION AND **MULTICULTURALISM**

LABOR'S PLAN

Australia is a multicultural community that celebrates diversity and social cohesion. A Shorten Labor Government is committed to Australia doing its part to welcome, resettle and support refugees, including vulnerable women and children facing persecution, and to work in support of a vibrant and inclusive multicultural society. Labor will:

- Provide $500 million to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), to deliver stronger safety, assessment and resettlement processes across the region.
- Reform the Community Sponsored Refugee Program to, over time, allow up to 5,000 extra refugees to resettle in Australia annually.
- Strengthen support for people in culturally and linguistically diverse communities across Australia by strengthening the Adult Migrant English Program; establishing a Bureau of Multicultural Australia to better tailor settlement services to community needs and improve data collection; and boosting support for community organisations.

In order to protect vulnerable women and children residing in Australia on temporary visas, Labor has also committed to deliver 20,000 Flexible Support Packages to provide financial assistance to people who have experienced domestic and family violence and support them to leave violent relationships and rebuild their lives. Women who are temporary visa holders will be eligible to access these packages.

IMPACT ON WOMEN

Right now there are 68.5 million people forcibly displaced around the globe – over half the displaced population are women and children. Displaced women and children are vulnerable at every stage of their journey: during conflict, during flight and in their place of refuge.

Labor's commitment to increase Australia's humanitarian intake will allow for greater resettlement of vulnerable women and children. The reforms we have announced to the Community Sponsored Refugee Program will go even further to support displaced women and children globally – and allow for more opportunities for family reunification.

Labor's comprehensive suite of measures is underpinned by a commitment to maintain Australia's strong borders – to ensure people smugglers are never again able to exploit and endanger vulnerable people.

Migrant women and women in Australia on temporary visas who are experiencing domestic and family violence can face additional risk because they are often unable to access the services they need. Risks include the inability to leave a violent relationship due to visa status, having to return to a violent relationship because their only other option is to leave Australia without their children, limited access to domestic violence services, and no access to income or non-emergency medical services. Labor's Flexible Support Packages will help reduce the vulnerability these women face.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

Australians understand our nation can be strong on borders and still treat people humanely.

The Liberals have failed Australia's multicultural communities by stigmatising migrants who have helped build our wonderful country with their cultural and economic contributions by demonising asylum seekers, refugees and vulnerable children in need of care.

Labor's policies ensure Australia does its fair share to meet humanitarian need, plays a leadership role in our region, and treats genuine refugees with dignity and humanity while maintaining strong border protection measures that protect the lives of vulnerable people.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

LABOR'S PLAN

Labor will rebuild and grow Australia's international development program and increase Official Development Assistance as a percentage of Gross National Income (GNI) every year that we are in office, starting with our first Budget.

Labor will also:

- Commit an additional $10 million to address the urgent humanitarian crisis affecting the Rohingya people.
- Increase Australia's funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) by $20 million.
- Invest $32 million in a Pacific Avoidable Blindness and Vision Loss Fund.
- Increase funding to NGOs in the Australian NGO Cooperation Program by $32 million to better support and work with civil society.

Gender equality and inclusion will be one of the central themes for Australia's international development program under Labor.

IMPACT ON WOMEN

The cuts to Australian aid programs by the Liberal Government in many neighbouring countries means less development, poorer health outcomes, more poverty, and greater deprivation.

And for a combination of cultural, political, social, and structural reasons, women are hit the hardest. Whether it is lack of access to educational opportunities, financial services, value chains, or higher paid occupations; justice systems that fail to protect women and girls against violence; or systemic discrimination, entrenched barriers maintain women's disadvantage.

Labor's commitment to grow our international development budget, along with specific commitments we've made will make a big difference for women in developing nations.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

The Liberal Government has relentlessly hacked at our aid funding. This is out of touch with the generous spirit of Australians, has contributed to Australia's diminishing influence in our region, and has harmed our efforts to make our region safer and more secure.

The Liberal Government has cut over $11 billion from our Overseas Development Assistance Budget, slashing Australia's aid programs that were supporting close neighbours in Southeast Asia. Aid spending will fall a further $115 million next financial year because of cuts in this Budget.

These cuts will take aid spending to just 0.19 per cent of GNI or 19 cents in every $100 – the lowest level on record – and on the current budget trajectory, it is forecast to drop to as low as just 0.16 per cent.

Under the Liberal Government, Australia's investment in family planning through international development has fallen roughly by one third compared with Labor's funding when last in Government.

This year, the Liberal Government refused to sign up to a United Nations International Women's Day Statement supported by 57 countries, including the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Japan.

This statement backed the call to help "remedy the accountability deficit in human rights violations of women and girls", including barriers to reproductive rights.

Labor remains concerned by media reports the Liberal Government withheld Australia's support because the statement explicitly called for universal protection of women's sexual and reproductive health, including access to safe abortion.

You can learn more about Labor's commitment to a national gender equality strategy and read our plan for action at **www.tanyaplibersek.com/SettingtheAgenda**

Labor's full list of policies for Australian women will be released soon.

Labor

CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

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Setting the agenda
A National Strategy for Gender Equality

Labor

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