



Leader of the Opposition

2016-11-23

Dear Renee and the Fair Agenda team,

I'm aware that Fair Agenda and your supporters, alongside advocates and experts, have been campaigning to stop violent perpetrators cross-examining survivors of domestic violence. Thank you for your work. **I want to let you know that we are listening to you.**

We have listened to the Productivity Commission, to advocates, and to experts, and **Labor is taking action.**

Today, on White Ribbon day, Terri Butler and I affirmed a plan that we will enact under a Labor Government. Right now, survivors of domestic violence are too often made to endure cross-examination from their violent ex-partners. That must no longer happen.

As Prime Minister, I will require judges to consider what should be done to protect vulnerable witnesses when family violence is alleged. And I'll equip them with the power and the resources to say enough is enough - no one should have to be re-traumatised by having their violent ex cross-examine them in the witness box. Labor will commit more than **\$43 million over four years** to make sure this practice ceases.

Your advocacy is very important, and your advocacy is still needed. Malcolm Turnbull's government is presiding over massive cuts to legal services - with a 30% funding cliff coming up in July. And his party continues to ignore your advocacy, the experts in the field, and the Productivity Commission; they are not taking action to reform cross-examination. This should not be a partisan issue. Please continue to push for these important measures, so that we don't have to wait until the next election to resolve this problem.

On behalf of Terri Butler, Mark Dreyfus, Tanya Plibersek and all of my Labor colleagues, thank you again for getting in touch with us about this important issue. Please keep up your good work.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Bill Shorten'.

Bill Shorten MP
Leader of the Opposition
Shadow Minister for Indigenous Affairs and
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

23 November 2016