



Women's Electoral Lobby | 8-10 Victoria Street, Newtown, NSW 2042

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Hon Bill Shorten MP  
Leader of the Opposition  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600  
CC: Amit Singh

27 May 2016

Dear Mr Shorten,

We write to ask you to make an **election commitment to provide long term secure Commonwealth funding for women's refuges and other front line services** for women and children escaping domestic and family violence.

The Women and Children's Safety Program (see attached fact sheet) has been developed by the Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL) to provide adequate long-term funding for women's refuges and other frontline women's emergency services, including transitional housing. Acknowledging that the current National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH) ends 30 June 2017, the Women and Children's Safety Program provides for women's refuges and other emergency front line life-saving services. The cost to the Commonwealth is an estimated \$1billion over five years, to be matched by the States.

The proposed program is supported by more than 30 women's and community organisations including Chief Executive Women, White Ribbon Australia, Women on Boards, National Women's Rural Coalition, Australian Federation of Graduate Women, Federation of Ethnic Communities Council, National Council of Single Mothers and their children and the Australian Women's Health Network.

While we welcome your existing commitments to measures designed to end violence against women, we strongly urge you to recognise that awareness raising programs and similar measures are insufficient if we are serious about ending violence. We also need to provide emergency life-saving services for women and children.

We are seeking your commitment to fund the Women and Children's Safety Program before the federal election. We ask that you respond by Friday 17 June to enable us to publish your response, along with those of other political parties, in the week before the federal election on 2 July.

Yours sincerely,

*Helen L'Orange*

Helen L'Orange AM, Convenor, WEL Violence Against Women Action Group

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For further information on WEL's Women and Children's Safety Program:

Visit [http://www.wel.org.au/wrahp\\_proposal](http://www.wel.org.au/wrahp_proposal) to view the Women and Children Safety Program Proposal and Women's Refuges and Housing Program Draft Bill.

Attachment: Women and Children's Safety Program Fact Sheet