

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**13 November 2012**

### **Equal opportunity in an age of insecurity**

Today women from a range of organisations gathered to consider the impact and the many contributing factors of insecure work on women's economic security.

"Government competition policy driving contestable funding has led to increased insecure employment in many industry areas including vocational education and training. Funding constraints in the TAFE sector have also resulted in cuts to women's programs and fewer opportunities for women already in insecure work to gain qualifications that will result in decent work" said Linda Simon of WAVE (women and vocational education).

One recurring theme throughout the forum was the potential for government employment, procurement and funding mechanisms to reduce insecure work. Government funding models should not be used to exacerbate insecure employment outcomes; in fact government funding processes could be used to reduce the incidence of insecure work.

"Insecure work could be the next big issue for women to deal with, along with paid parental leave" said Mary Louise Clifford of BPW Australia.

"Ideas raised today continued the conversation about women and work and firmly located available, affordable and age appropriate childcare as an enabling condition for women to engage in decent, permanent work" said Samiro Douglas, Executive Director of WIRE Women's Information Ltd.

For small business woman, Judith Van Unen, the forum today reminded everyone that both small business owners and their employees need flexibility. "Small businesses are predominantly family businesses; everyone involved wants to be treated with respect and be aware of their legal and industrial responsibilities. Both employees and employers want secure work and decent incomes".

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