

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Measuring the progress: economic security for women**

economic Security4Women welcomes the next step towards gender equality in the workplace with the tabling of reporting requirements of employers in Parliament, by the Minister for the Status of Women Julie Collins.

“We hope that these gender reporting requirements will provide clarity for employers and will contribute to the workplace changes needed for more women - and men - to be able to combine paid work and unpaid care responsibilities” said the Chairperson of eS4W, Ms Sandra Cook.

“As we understand it, apart from outright discrimination against women in the workplace, it is the unpaid care responsibilities that have the greatest impact on the number of hours women are able to work. This has a flow on effect on to promotions, especially into senior executive positions. Experience in these leadership positions is essential as it contributes to increased numbers of women on boards and as CEOs. These reporting requirements will measure flexible work arrangements in the larger firms that can accommodate these care responsibilities and will result in increased numbers of women in leadership positions”.

“Currently many women have to take insecure and casual work in order to juggle earning an income with unpaid care responsibilities. These care responsibilities include care for babies and children, of course; they include in particular care for children before and after school and during school holidays. They also include care for parents, spouses and other family members. They can also involve caring for close friends” said Ms Sally Jope, Acting Executive Officer for eS4W.

“eS4W contributed to the consultation on these reporting requirements and we understand that there has to be a simple system of reporting that results in accurate information that is actually helpful to the firms that employ 100 and more people”.

“We look to these larger firms who have the resources to develop and offer work place gender equity programs for examples that may be applicable to small to medium enterprises with fewer resources. Smaller businesses are not required to report but we recognise that they are the major employers of women. With larger firms taking the lead on gender equality, smaller businesses will also need to demonstrate family friendly workplaces in order to compete for the best person for the job.”

We look forward to continuing to work with the Government, employers and unions to further implement the workplace gender equality reforms.

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