

Submission to the Productivity Commission Inquiry into Paid Parental Leave

I am a 30 year old male with no children. I am currently working full time in the Union sector. I am planning on having children in next 5 to 10 years.

I support the commission's inquiry into paid paternal leave. Below I have listed some of my concerns regarding the proposed scheme.

I would like the reports acknowledgement of the 6 months parental leave being the optimal time period to be taken into account. 18 weeks is far from the optimal period of 6 months. If Australia is serious about investing in our future we should take the chance now to create a scheme that goes the whole way and really gives parents a leg up.

I think that parental leave should be paid at the same level as ordinary leave and not the at the minimum wage rate. The minimum wage is based on the needs of a single adult only. It does not take into account the cost of raising a newborn child. If it is to be paid at the minimum wage it would also have the effect of devaluing parental leave as opposed to other forms of leave. If the aim of the scheme is to normalise parental leave it should be paid at the same rate as other forms of leave.

I would also like to see other types of leave accrue when parental leave is taken. I think this would help parents feel more comfortable in taking parental leave and also minimise the disruption to their working lives.

Many employers would benefit from the introduction of paid paternal leave. It would be fair to ask for a contribution from at the very least the most profitable companies in order to relieve the burden on taxpayers.

I also see the supporting partner's leave of only two weeks as inadequate. Two weeks is not enough time to allow for times when the primary carer may need support as well as emergencies require when both parents are required. Parenting is a shared job, and having such disproportionate leave periods would unfairly place the burden on the one parent.

In regards to the optional 10 days "keeping in touch" work, the rate of pay should be the normal rate as these 10 days would form part of the parental leave period. Leave should be extended accordingly when the optional days of work are taken.

Thankyou for taking my submission into consideration.

Regards

