



WOMEN'S LEGAL SERVICES NSW

**Incorporating
Women's Legal Resources Centre
Domestic Violence Advocacy Service
Indigenous Women's Program
Walgett Family Violence Prevention Legal Service
Bourke/Brewarrina Family Violence Prevention Legal Service**

24 June 2010

The Hon Julia Gillard MP
Prime Minister
Parliament House
Barton ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister

Women's Legal Services NSW congratulates you on your appointment as Australia's first female Prime Minister of Australia.

Women's Legal Services NSW is a community legal centre that aims to achieve access to justice and a just legal system for women in NSW by promoting women's human rights, redressing inequalities experienced by women and fostering legal and social change through strategic legal services, community development, community legal education and law and policy reform work.

We believe your appointment is an important milestone in the advancement of women's leadership in Australia, and is an important step towards improving the representation of women in leadership and decision-making roles at the highest level in our country.

We welcome the other recent steps taken by the government to address gender inequality in Australia, including the new paid parental leave scheme and the introduction of draft legislation to strengthen the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth).

We hope that, under your leadership, the government will continue to implement measures to address gender inequality in Australia, including through:

- improving women's access to justice by better resourcing community legal centres, including women's and Aboriginal women's legal services;
- reforming the family law system to better protect the safety of women and children;
- strengthening further the *Sex Discrimination Act* by implementing the remainder of the Senate Legislative and Constitutional Affairs Committee's recommendations to improve the Act;
- implementing a National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Children that is well-resourced and includes a system for independent monitoring of the plan's implementation; and
- providing adequate funding to social and community services to ensure pay equity for workers in these services without the need to reduce existing levels.

We look forward to future conversations with you and your government about ways to achieve access to justice and a just legal system for the women of Australia.

Yours sincerely,
Women's Legal Services NSW

Helen Campbell
Acting Executive Officer



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