



Women Need a Stronger Voice in Our Parliament



Fellow Australians,

Despite all the gains around gender equality over the last 117 years in Australian society, the role of women in our community still suffers from unacceptable inequality.

When we consider the amount of wealth available to women at retirement compared to men, it reveals that Australian women are still not appreciated, respected and valued as they should be.

Our mothers, sisters and daughters need to be all they can be in life. They should be accepted not just because of their beauty, but valued as citizens due to the content of their character and the depth of their contribution to Australian society.

We all need role models. In parliament, in the ministry and the cabinet, the low numbers of women robs the nation of their talents and dilutes their influence. Men and women think differently. They approach problems from different perspectives and often find different solutions. Australia deserves to benefit from the wise counsel of all its people, not just the few.

Do we really believe that women are not as talented as men or do not have as much to offer as men? Are they not as capable of solving a crisis or making a judgement? We need to recognise these qualities and use them for the betterment of our society as a whole.

It has been 117 years since women were granted the right to vote and stand for parliament. How much longer will it be before our male-dominated society recognises the value of each and every Australian regardless of their gender? The recent allegations of bullying by sitting MPs have further blighted the government and shown their true colours when it comes to gender equality and balanced representation.

It is time for all of us to demand changes to address this inequality if we want a truly united country. When parliament is slow to respond and our citizens' rights and opportunities are being suppressed, it is time for the people to act and force the change.

History has shown us that legislation is an effective tool in achieving social change. We have seen that in the workforce and in the application of racial discrimination laws. We need to have a proper gender balance in our cabinet and ministry. If Canada can do it, why can't we?

Ministers are role models for our society. If we have a ministry dominated by one gender, what sort of message does that send to our people? That one gender is more valuable than the other? That our daughters are not as valuable as our sons? That women can be treated differently from men?

Why is it that more women than men receive low-income support and low-income super? Why is it that one in six women have been subjected to domestic violence, compared to one in sixteen men?

Change starts at the top. We need laws guaranteeing that each gender is well represented in cabinet so we send the right message to Australians that our daughters and our sons are equally important. If change does not come now it may never come. We need laws requiring all genders to be properly represented in all decision-making bodies of the Australian government.

Stand up for what is right and support the United Australia Party to put Australia first at the next Federal Election. Together we can achieve the extraordinary.

Clive F Palmer
Federal Leader
United Australia Party

