

To the Government Administration Select Committee

I am making a submission supporting the Parental Leave and Employment Protection (Six Months' Paid Leave) Amendment Bill.

I am very much in favour of the proposal to extend paid parental leave to 26 weeks. I believe this will be a positive move for babies, mothers, families and New Zealand society as a whole.

I submit that:

- The first six months of a child's life is the most crucial for bonding and forming a secure attachment between parents and babies. Extending paid parental leave provides our smallest citizens with the chance to spend these precious weeks at home bonding with their parents.
- Evidence tells us that breastfeeding for a minimum of six months is good for babies and lays a sound foundation for positive physical, social and emotional development of children. 26 weeks paid leave would enable more mothers to afford this.
- Caring for our tamariki is important work, and the best people to provide this are parents. We need to give all parents the choice to be able to provide home-based care in the first year of their baby's life, not just those who can afford it.
- There are also sound economic benefits of extending paid parental leave – it enables parents to afford to have babies and so helps address our declining birth rates, it makes it easier for women to return to the workforce saving on staff turnover costs. Providing a sound start for babies is the best investment government can make; it saves money in the areas of health, social welfare, education, and crime prevention further down the track.
- New Zealand is lagging behind the rest of the OECD in terms of paid parental leave, extending it will bring New Zealand into line with other countries.

In particular I support this Bill because:

Thank you for considering my submission.

I **would / would not** like to speak to the Select Committee about my submission.

Yours,

Name: -----

Email: -----



Committee Secretariat
Government Administration
Parliament Buildings
WELLINGTON

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