**Supporting Working Parents: Pregnancy and Return to Work National Review**

Questionnaire response from employers and industry groups addressing issues of pregnancy, parental leave and return to work

**Questionnaire Number:** 42

**Employer name:** Not submitted on behalf of an employer

**Part C Questionnaire Response**

As a small business I don’t have the luxury of a HR dept to look after these sort of issues. My "HR" dept is typically performed by our female staff and as such if they go on leave then HR is transferred to me the owner. I have enough to do just keeping the business running and ensuring everybody else actually has a job. I have skilled workers and if one goes on parental leave (male or female) how do I replace them? where do i get a skilled worker who is prepared to work for a few weeks or months? If i hire a contractor it usually cost me about 200% more to cover the labour hire companies, costs, etc, never mind the time i need to train them. Who is going to reimburse me for that extra cost.

Pregnancy is usually a choice. It has been happening for years and will always continue with or without Government intervention. Government cannot expect business to keep footing the bill for romantic gestures. Something has to give when pressure mounts. Our economy is in tatters, jobless figures are rising and now we add another layer of burden on business. This policy of Abbots will cost women jobs because despite all the rhetoric, a business owner will always do what is right for the business. In the current environment that means confining costs and eliminating excess. If you put the figures on the table without emotion or grandstanding then this policy will be a factor in deciding who gets employed and who doesn’t.