

NATIONAL INDEPENDENT RETAILERS ASSOCIATION

Media Release

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Keep Paid Parental Leave Simple

NIRA supports the provisions of paid parental leave and the way the government has limited costs on small business, at least for the initial phase. But the government must ensure that the payment system is simple.

Peter Strong, CEO of NIRA, stated today “we have received information that the government wishes to involve employers in the payment process. They are proposing that instead of Centrelink paying the eligible people directly that Centrelink will send the cheques to the relevant small business owners and have them put the cheque into their bank account and then pay the person through their payroll. This is not sensible, why make something more complex than it should be?”

Mr Strong added that “any extra paperwork or involvement of business owners in the process will add to compliance costs, create opportunity for mistakes to be made and confuse everyone. Small retailers in particular do not have paymasters and pay teams to manage the process and are more concerned about training staff and serving customers than acting as a paymaster for government.” He added that “the KISS principle must apply here, Keep It Simple.”

NIRA asks the Minister for Deregulation, Lindsay Tanner, to ensure that the process is easy and achievable and that small business owners do not get added red tape burdens. Small business must not be involved in the process.

Mr Strong also added “we must decrease red tape and compliance costs on small retailers, not add extra work where it is unnecessary. Paid parental leave will increase participation of women in the workforce and provide for the maintenance of skills. It will also help decrease the stress levels of new parents but we should not transfer any of that stress onto other individuals, particularly those running a business. Let Centrelink pay the new parents directly not through a busy third party.”

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