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Dear Ms Annese,

Thank you for writing to us about the Diversity Council Australia's Pre-Election Survey 2022. I welcome the opportunity to outline Labor's approach to the issues you have raised.

Yours sincerely

Paul Erickson  
ALP National Secretary

## Questionnaire - Diversity Council Australia

### **Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people**

An Albanese Labor Government will progress a referendum for a constitutionally enshrined Voice to Parliament and establish a Makarrata Commission with responsibility for Treaty and Truth-Telling, as matters of priority in our first term.

Labor established the Closing the Gap framework in 2008 and we are committed to funding the policies and programs required to deliver change.

An Albanese Labor Government will work with the Coalition of Peaks and all levels of government to raise the ambition of the current targets. Labor will invest in First Nations health, housing and jobs, and helping to turn the tide on incarceration with a landmark justice reinvestment program.

Labor will abolish the Community Development Program – an ineffective and broken remote jobs program – and replace it with scheme that delivers real jobs, with real pay and real conditions. You can find more information on Labor’s First Nation Policy [here](#).

**Gender Equality** Until women have true equality, we are falling short as a nation.

Under the Morrison Government, women have been left behind. We’ve plummeted down the global gender gap rankings since 2013 to our worst ever result of 50th place worldwide. Australia should be leading the world in equality between women and men.

This starts with our Parliament, and Labor has committed to implementing every recommendation of the Set the Standard report as a priority.

Women make up half the population and that should be reflected in our Parliaments. Anthony Albanese’s Shadow Cabinet has an even share of women and men. And women make up half of Labor’s elected representatives.

More women at the table means better decisions for Australian women. We’ll make sure the decisions we make in government support equality through:

- A National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality – Labor will introduce a National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality to guide whole of government actions to achieve gender equality.
- Strengthening the Office for Women – Labor will strengthen the Office for Women so it can oversee the implementation of gender impact assessment and provide advice on policies that impact on the social and economic wellbeing and participation of Australian women.
- A gender lens on policy – Labor will introduce gender impact assessments on relevant cabinet submissions and new policy proposals identified by the Office for Women to assess how policies will impact on women and gender equality objectives.
- Gender responsive budgeting – Labor will deliver an annual Women’s Budget Statement to assess the impact new budget measures have on women and examine how the allocation of public resources effects gender equality

## Child care

Improving our child care system is a fundamental economic reform. No-one should be penalised for taking on extra hours, extra days or a job. Fees are up 41 per cent under the Liberals. Only Labor has a plan to fix Scott Morrison's broken child care system.

An Albanese Labor Government will reduce the cost of child care and make it easier for mums, children and working families to get ahead. Labor will:

- Lift the maximum child care subsidy rate to 90 per cent for families for the first child in care.
- Increase child care subsidy rates for every family with one child in care earning less than \$530,000 in household income.
- Keep higher child care subsidy rates for the second and additional children in care.
- Extend the increased subsidy to outside school hours care.

Labor's plan means 96 per cent of families in the child care system are better off – that's 1.26 million families. No family will be worse off.

Labor will also develop and implement a whole of government Early Years Strategy to create a new integrated approach to the early years and to develop a program of action.

Labor will invest approximately \$5.4 billion to make child care cheaper, starting from July 2023. You can read more about Labor's Child Care Policy [here](#).

## Parental Leave

Labor introduced Australia's first government funded paid parental leave scheme and dad and partner pay and we'll always work to make it stronger.

## Minister for Women

Achieving gender equality will be a central priority for a Labor Government. Labor's Minister for Women will be responsible for overseeing our National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality as well as the implementation of a meaningful gender lens on government decision making. You can read more about our priorities in the [2022 Women's Budget Statement](#).

## Gender Pay Gap/Industrial Segregation

A Labor Government will lead a [national drive to close the gender pay gap](#), including:

- Making gender pay equity an object of the Fair Work Act and strengthening the capacity and ability of the Fair Work Commission to order pay rises for workers in low paid, female dominated industries, including in child care and aged care.
- Legislating so companies with more than 250 employees will have to report their gender pay gap publicly.
- Prohibiting pay secrecy clauses and giving employees the right to disclose their pay, if they want to.
- Taking action to address the gender pay gap in the Australian Public Service.
- Making a submission to the Fair Work Commission in favour of a pay rise for aged care workers and funding the outcome of the case.

You can read more about our Equality for Woman and Fair Pay and Condition for Working Women policies [here](#) and [here](#).

## **Women's Workforce Participation**

To stop the decline in women's economic security and get women back on track after COVID, Labor will set up an independent Women's Economic Security Taskforce to help the government make smart, targeted investments through our first Budget and beyond to advance economic equality and support women's workforce participation.

Labor has already announced our child care reforms, which will make it easier for parents to balance work and care responsibilities and will help boost women's workforce participation. We'll also support women's workforce participation through our [Secure Jobs Plan](#), which will help more women participate in the workforce with jobs that allow them to plan for their futures with certainty.

## **Workplace Sexual Harassment**

Labor will take real action to [end sexual harassment at work](#) and we'll fully implement all 55 Respect@Work recommendations, including:

- Legislating a positive duty on employers to stamp out sexual harassment.
- Investing \$24 million to properly fund Working Women's Centers in every Australian State and Territory.
- Setting up a one-stop-shop for information on victims rights and referrals.
- Supporting victims of historical workplace sexual harassment.

## **Mental Health**

The COVID pandemic has placed incredible strain on the mental health of all Australians, in particular youth. Global data indicates a 25 per cent increase in depression and anxiety with young people among the groups most affected.

Labor understands the importance of mental health care for Australians, regardless of where they live, especially during the COVID pandemic. We will continue to work to improve mental health provisions for all Australians.

## **Domestic and Family Violence and Abuse**

Labor will provide the national leadership and investment needed to help end family, domestic and sexual violence, starting with:

- Establishing a new Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Commissioner to act as a strong voice for victim-survivors.
- Funding [500 new community sector workers](#) to support women in crisis.
- Investing \$77 million to help make sure all Australian school students are able to access high quality, age-appropriate [consent and respectful relationships education](#).
- Working with States and Territories to strengthen and harmonise laws relating to sexual assault and consent.
- Legislating 10 days of paid family and domestic violence leave.
- Delivering a separate national plan for First Nations people to end violence against women and family violence.
- Support [justice reinvestment](#) in First Nations communities with a \$79 million investment to reduce incarceration rates, including early intervention to reduce family violence.

- We will also match existing funding for the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children in the 2022 Budget.

We will also deliver more [safe and affordable housing](#), helping women and children fleeing violence.

- \$1.6 billion will be spent to build 4,000 new social housing properties specifically allocated for women and children fleeing domestic and family violence.
- \$100 million will be allocated for crisis and transitional housing options for women and children fleeing domestic and family violence, and older women on low incomes who are at risk of homelessness.

You can read more about Labor's Women's Safety agenda [here](#).

### **Disability Agenda**

The Australian Labor Party has a proud track record of promoting the rights and independence of people with a disability. Labor established the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) to deliver quality support to people with disability and enable them to exercise choice and control over their lives.

The NDIS is a great Labor legacy and because of Labor's vision and foresight, the NDIS now stands side by side with Medicare as a key pillar of a fair and decent society. The scheme has been damaged by a decade of mismanagement under the Liberals, with a botched rollout out to States and Territories and continued attempts to undermine and cut support from those who rely on it.

An Albanese Labor Government will protect the NDIS and get it back on track so it works for people with disability and their families, carers, disability service providers and workers.

To improve labour force participation for Australians with disability, an Albanese Labor Government will seek to improve employment outcomes with a Disability Employment Centre for Excellence that will provide a clearing house for ideas and increase capacity among employment services.

### **LGBTIQ+**

Labor understands the critical importance of ensuring that the LGBTIQ+ community has equal access and opportunity and appreciates the needs for support and funding for this unique community. While many issues are pressing for this community, mental health and aged care will continue to be a focus for Labor, and we are committed to removing all barriers to access and opportunity.

### **Age Diversity**

Labor will establish Jobs and Skills Australia to drive improved employment outcomes.

Having the right skills has not always proven to be enough. Age discrimination persists. Former Prime Minister Julia Gillard tackled this by appointing an Age Discrimination Commissioner. But government cannot legislate the cultural change that is essential.

Ageism needs to be called out by each and every one of us. Employers in particular must play their part. They should value them. They should retain them. They should hire them.

According to Deloitte Access Economics, a 3 per cent increase in workforce participation by Australians aged over 55 would generate a \$33 billion boost to the economy each year.

To build a stronger economy, we must harness the talents of everybody - and that includes older Australians who are sources of wisdom and experience for their employers and co-workers.

An Albanese Labor Government will provide young Australians with strong and formalised engagement in government and policy making. Under the Morrison Government, young people have been denied the opportunity to be part of forming the policies and making the decisions that impact their lives and futures.

As a result, younger people now face a future of high underemployment, depleted retirement savings, significant barriers to education and training, and a rent and housing affordability crisis. You can read more about Labor's Youth Engagement Model [here](#).

### **Culturally and Racially Diverse Australians**

Multiculturalism is one of Australia's greatest achievements. From 200 countries and speaking more than 260 languages - Australia's diversity is truly one of our biggest strengths.

The Morrison Government have failed migrant and multicultural women and those from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

Labor has a long history of celebrating, defending and harnessing multiculturalism in Australia. Labor is committed to a comprehensive national anti-racism strategy, focused on a national anti-racism campaign and empowering culturally and linguistically diverse communities.