

# Media Release

**Fiona Richardson MP**

Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence  
Minister for Women



Monday, 5 December, 2016

## VICTORIA LEADS ON GENDER EQUALITY

The Andrews Labor Government today announced a series of landmark reforms to support women and girls to be safer and stronger in their homes, workplaces and community.

*Safe and Strong: A Victorian Gender Equality Strategy* will address inequality, sexism and violence against women in all its forms.

The Royal Commission into Family Violence found that gender inequality is one of the key drivers behind family violence.

Action on gender equality is urgent. Family violence costs the Victorian economy more than \$3.4 billion per year.

Closing Australia's gender employment gap – including the pay gap and number of women in the paid workforce – would boost the GDP by 11 per cent.

Public forums held across Victoria canvassed views from more than 1,200 women and men including people from the Aboriginal, disability, culturally diverse, rural and regional and LGBTI communities.

The reforms and initiatives include:

- A Gender Equality Act
- A new agency dedicated to preventing family violence before it starts
- Reviewing laws against sexist advertising and gender based hate speech
- Gender audits across government and the public sector to create inclusive and flexible workplaces
- Scholarships to encourage young and emerging women leaders
- Gender equality programs in grassroots sporting clubs
- HERPlace – a women's heritage centre
- Hosting the first all women trade delegation to China
- Promoting women's cultural activities, art and media

The Government provided \$9 million to women and gender equality initiatives to the *Victorian Budget 2016/17*.

*Safe and Strong: A Victorian Gender Equality Strategy* can be accessed: [www.women.vic.gov.au](http://www.women.vic.gov.au)

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Women and the Prevention of Family Violence Fiona Richardson

*"Addressing gender inequality is crucial if we are serious about ending violence against women. Bad attitudes towards women are the basis for family violence."*

*"The stakes couldn't be higher. Men and women deserve to live in a society with safety, equal respect and equal opportunities."*

*"Supporting women to reach their full potential is crucial to the whole economy. Gender inequality doesn't just impact women but all workplaces, all families and all individuals."*