

Media release
18 September 2009

Pay Equity Challenge Coalition Launches With Pay-Equi-tea at Parliament

The Pay Equity Challenge coalition was officially launched on the steps of Parliament today, the eve of Suffrage Day, by campaigners dressed in the fashions worn by Kate Sheppard when New Zealand women became the first in the world to win the right to vote. The coalition is asking why, 116 years later, despite equality at the ballot box women still can't get paid the same as men for doing work of equal value.

The coalition held a 'Pay Equi-tea' at which they shared a cake, missing a symbolic 12% slice, representing the continuing gap between women's and men's pay. The Minister of Labour Kate Wilkinson and the Minister for Women's Affairs Pansy Wong were invited to attend, but they declined. MPs Sue Moroney and Keith Locke attended, along with Helen Kelly, President of the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions.

"Although the Ministers are unable to attend today's tea party, Pay Equity Challenge coalition members will watch with interest how the Government plans to ensure women get a full share of the cake in the future," said coalition spokeswoman Angela McLeod, President of New Zealand Federation of Business and Professional Women.

The goals of the Pay Equity Challenge coalition are:

- To achieve equal value and recognition of women's work
- To keep pressure on government to address pay and employment equity
- To support groups of workers fighting for pay and employment equity
- To create pressure on employers to address pay and employment equity
- To look at industrial, social, legal and political solutions
- To keep pay and employment equity on the public agenda
- To educate the public about pay and employment equity and build support for the coalition

Pay Equity Challenge coalition members are:

Women's Studies Association; New Zealand Union of Students Association (NZUSA); NZ Federation of Business and Professional Women (BPW NZ); Workplace Wellbeing Project; Working Women's Resource Centre; National Network of Stopping Violence Services; Coalition for Equal Value for Equal Pay (CEVEP); Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG); Rural Women NZ; Zonta Club of Mana; NZ Council of Trade Unions (CTU); Public Service Association (PSA); NZ Educational Institute (NZEI); Post Primary Teachers Association (PPTA); NZ Nurses Organisation (NZNO); Tertiary Education Union (TEU); Engineering Printing & Manufacturing Union (EPMU); Service & Food Workers Union (SFWU); National Distribution Union (NDU); Dairy Workers Union (DWU); Finsec; Unite; Maritime Union of NZ (MUNZ); Meat Workers Union (MWU); Corrections Association

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TV1 Clip re Pay Equity:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6B1kpe7YoI>
Further news and TV3 news clip can be found by following the link:

<http://www.fairdeal.org.nz/>

Photos of the launch can be found at:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/union/sets/72157622275631911/>