

Kia ora, welcome to you all this morning.

Thank you for braving a frosty start to the day to celebrate a piece of legislation which is warmly welcomed by the NZ Federation of Business and Professional Women (BPWNZ).

I'm Angela McLeod Vice President BPWNZ and one of the spokespeople for the Coalition for Quality Flexible Work legislation. 50 plus groups in NZ formed the Coalition to lobby for change in the workplace and today we can stand proud in the fact that the legislation is now in place.

Employees, especially women, can be secure in knowing that they now have a legal framework in which to request flexible work practice. Their careers, income and sanity can now start being restored.

Opponents say that this legislation is going to destroy businesses. Well they need to embrace it. It is our belief as a business and professional organisation that it's a win / win situation. They need to embrace this for improved staff engagement, productivity and performance. Businesses in New Zealand need to lead the way - for our social and economic well-being.

This legislation goes another step further to Improving our work / life balance. When word gets out around the world about this legislation - this will be our point of difference in attracting skilled workers, new businesses and ethical business investment.

And given the bad press our economy has attracted of late the effects of this legislation, I believe, will lead to an increase in our economic performance. And we can all embrace that.

Thank you.

Thanks to my fellow campaigners - you can rest today and enjoy this morning's celebration. You've earned it.

Thanks to my fellow spokespeople, Cee Hayne-Parker of the NZ Nurses Organisation, Viv Gurrey of Parents Centre and Andrew Campbell of Finsec.

Lyndy McIntyre- thanks for keeping us focussed over the past two years, for organising our lobbying meetings and for preparing our press releases. You've been great.

Thanks to the Green Party, Labour, NZ First, Maori Party, United Future, and the Progressives for supporting this legislation and voting it through the process so that now we celebrate.

The CTU have been great supporters and hard-working members of the Coalition for Quality Flexible work legislation - in particular Carol Beaumont and Eileen Brown thanks ever so much for your support and encouragement.

Thanks too to everyone who has helped with organising and preparing the celebration breakfast this morning.

I know I may have left some names out but I can't leave out this one. Sue Kedgley.

Sue, thanks ever so much for your tireless work on behalf of the workers of New Zealand who want better work/life balance and the right to request flexible working arrangements. And for your unfailing support for the employers of NZ who want better working conditions for their staff because they know that happy staff are more productive.

Kia kaha wahine