

Women's Electoral Lobby (Australia) Inc

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The Fairness Agenda – How do the major parties rate?

At the end of a long 5 week campaign, the Women's Electoral Lobby, as one of Australia's enduring women's activist organisations, has scored the major social policies of each party for fairness against a *Feminist Policy Framework*.

"Regrettably, there has been too little focus this campaign on good social policy." said Kathleen Swinbourne, WEL's Elections Coordinator "We are very disappointed that few of the issues that make a fair society and help women – and men – to lead their lives, have been discussed much at all. Issues like fairness in pay, child care, family law and workplace culture were sadly missing."

The Greens performed better than Labor, which in turn outscored the Coalition in terms of fairness and equity in social policy. While Labor have made a commitment to pay equity and improvements in terms of workplace culture, there are some areas where they need a lot more focus. And apart from paid parental leave, which scored positively for the Liberal Party, most of its policies just don't cut it.

Despite a focus by Labor and Coalition parties on education in the final weeks, WEL has given them a low score in terms of gender in education issues.

"Neither party has addressed ways to get more disadvantaged women into education, and keep them there. Both concentrate on using the income support system to force sole parents and indigenous women into work, but neither party encourages them to get an education so they can get better jobs." said Jozefa Sobski, Convenor of WEL NSW and spokesperson on education.

WEL's scorecard can be used to help people make up their minds how to vote on the important issues. It covers areas that promote women's financial security and enable better management of the work/life balance.

The final scorecard can be viewed, with supporting background information, on the WEL website <http://wel.org.au/index.php/2010-election/feminist-policy-framework/>

WEL will be handing out postcards setting out their ratings on the major policies of the ALP, Liberal Party and the Greens at major stations and in marginal electorates.

For media opportunities or comment contact Kathleen Swinbourne, Elections Coordinator
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