



**Impact analysis
Legislative and policy achievements
of EMILY's List women in power
Federal Parliament 2007-2013**

*When Women
Support Women,
Women Win*

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Background Note:

This impact analysis was commissioned by the EMILY's List National Committee and prepared by Sophie Arnold as part of a Bachelor of Legal Studies (Latrobe University) placement with EMILY's List Australia. We gratefully acknowledge contributions from EL's National Co-Convenors Tanja Kovac and Senator Anne McEwen, EL's National Coordinator, Lisa Carey and Leonie Morgan, as well as all of our EMILY's List MPs in the preparation of this report.



Figure 1: A meme developed by the EMILY's List Social Media Action Re-election Team (of which the author was a member) in the lead-up to the 2013 election. It was ultimately viewed by more than 90,000 Facebook users. (Source: EMILY's List internal research).

Foreword

EMILY's List Australia turns 18 this November and it is a coming of age worth celebrating.

Established in 1996 by a group of progressive, political women which included former premiers Joan Kirner and Carmen Lawrence and Australia's first woman prime minister, Julia Gillard, the organisation is a national network of women committed to electing progressive Labor women to parliaments across Australia.

Over its 18 years, EMILY's List has encouraged and supported more than 150 women like me to run for parliament.

Emily's List is a driving force behind our quest to make the election of remarkable women to parliament unremarkable.

Great gains have been made by Labor Governments because of the many progressive women it has assisted to become involved in Cabinet and caucus decision-making.

As the organisation approached its coming of age, it was timely to assess the contribution made by EMILY's List women members of the federal parliament.

The Labor Governments led by former prime ministers Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard between 2007 and 2013 were an ideal place to start.

I am pleased personally and professionally that the results of this impact analysis place on record the very significant legislative reforms enacted during this period for the benefit of women, children and families.

As this report shows, Australia's first paid parental leave scheme was just one of the many examples of such legislative change. That is in addition to equal pay for community sector workers; secure disability funding; significant increases to pensions and tax benefits for part-time working women; inclusion of abortion medication RU486 on the pharmaceutical benefits scheme; a national plan to protect women and children from violence, and systematic investment in indigenous housing, education, health and employment.

I commend this publication to you as a valuable record of the impact of the women members of parliament supported by EMILY's List between 2007 and 2013 - a group of remarkable women I was very proud to be a part of.

Tanya

Tanya Plibersek

Introduction

The Labor governments led by Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard between 2007 and 2013 included the “highest representation of women of any of the major Australian political parties (36%), as well as a record number of women in any Federal Cabinet or Ministry”.²

Many of these women were elected with the support of EMILY’s List Australia (ELA), a non-profit organisation set up in 1996 by a group of politically active, progressive women as a “financial, political and personal support network for the election of progressive women candidates”.³

In return for funding, mentoring and other support, EMILY’s List Members of Parliament (MPs) pledge to actively work towards the implementation of progressive policies relating to affordable child care, reproductive choice, equity, equality and diversity. While these Labor governments ultimately became mired in bitter infighting amid an unprecedented debate about the role of a woman in Australia’s highest office, they also oversaw a significant legislative reform agenda with “important implications for different parts of society and our common good”.⁴

In the first two years of the minority government led by Julia Gillard – one of the founding members of EMILY’s List – the national parliament passed more than 300 pieces of legislation in such key areas as carbon pricing; paid parental leave; improved health, aged and child care; disability funding and worker safety.⁵

This paper will examine the role played by the progressive women supported into the federal parliament by EMILY’s List in enacting this significant legislative reform agenda, particularly in areas which reflect the EMILY’s List key values of equity, child care, equal pay, diversity and reproductive choice.



EMILY's List – a snapshot

EMILY's List is a not-for-profit, membership based association guided by a voluntary national committee and run by a combination of paid staff and volunteers. Set up in 1996, the organisation adapted the model of the US organisation of the same name which provides Democratic women with seed funding for campaigns. (EMILY is an acronym which stands for *Early Money is Like Yeast* "because it makes the dough rise".⁶)

By 2013, the organisation had supported the election of 155 progressive candidates to Australian parliaments, with some 40 elected to the national parliament. EMILY's List supported candidates and members of parliament are offered campaign training, mentoring and fundraising support in exchange for promoting a progressive agenda in parliament.

EMILY's List is also committed to increasing awareness and bringing about change in areas such as equity, childcare, equal pay, diversity and choice.

EMILY's List policies are based on research carried out before each federal (and some state) elections. Focus groups with women in metropolitan and regional marginal seats discuss issues affecting women and possible policy solutions.

The results are then provided to the Australian Labor Party (ALP) and EMILY's List candidates to build into their campaigning and, during parliamentary terms, "into the heart of ALP policy making through EMILY's List members who are in Parliament".⁷

Jenny Macklin, former Minister and EMILY's List's longest serving member of the federal parliament, described the research as "invaluable in helping me shape Labor campaigns to meet the needs of women".⁸

Legislative reform

When the Labor Government announced in May 2009 that it would legislate to provide working parents with new-born children with 18 weeks paid parental leave from 1 January 2011,⁹ EMILY's List national co-convenor Hutch Hussein said that it was “no coincidence that this historic policy reform”¹⁰ was occurring during a parliament which included such a strong representation of progressive women. “Progressive policy reform benefiting women has a greater chance of being formulated within parties when their MPs and Cabinet Ministers making the final decisions reflect and have an understanding of the experiences and needs of the population they serve.”¹¹

Making and amending legislation is one of the key functions of government. Members of parliament examine the need for new or amended laws in parliamentary committees and speak in favour or against bills as they move through the bi-cameral parliamentary system. Attributing the introduction or successful passage of legislation to any one person is problematic as most legislative change requires the support of the major (and, at times, minor) parties. While individual members (usually Government Ministers) are given responsibility for introducing legislation and any MP can be vocal in supporting the passage of legislation, this isn't necessarily a reflection of individual achievement or responsibility.

In a 2004 analysis of the effectiveness of EMILY's List-supported MPs in raising issues of most concern to women constituents in the federal parliament, Sawyer acknowledged that the “question of the substantive representation of issues of particular concern to women is a more difficult one to track”.¹² Sawyer sought to use the number of times EL-supported women raised such issues as paid maternity leave and domestic violence in parliament to show whether “EL has contributed to the substantive representation of women in the Australian Parliament as well as to their increased presence”.¹³ In doing so, she conceded, that “evidence from parliamentary debate is inconclusive on its own,”¹⁴ particularly as it excludes the contribution of women to parliamentary committees and in lobbying within their own parties where “some would argue that women parliamentarians are at their most effective”.¹⁵

Sawyer did, however, credit EMILY's List with providing a structure which enabled MPs to maintain a “form of feminist collectivity”¹⁶ and a “mandate to work collectively with other women”.¹⁷ While individual members can push for legislative reform in the party room, they must have sufficient support and influence to be effective. Having the largest ever group of EMILY's List supported women MPs in the governments between 2007 and 2013 – all of whom had agreed to “be advocates for change that benefits women and benefits communities”¹⁸ – meant that there was a “critical mass of women in the ALP Caucus that made the voices of women heard on important issues”.¹⁹ Introducing the Paid Parental Leave Bill in May 2010, long-time EL member and Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Jenny Macklin, acknowledged the important role played by two other longstanding EL members, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Julia Gillard, and Tanya Plibersek, Minister for the Status of Women. “Both have had a long-term commitment to the development of paid parental leave. Their hard work, along with that of countless other women, has finally made this policy a reality.”²⁰

The paid parental leave scheme was one of many examples of legislative changes introduced by the Labor governments between 2007 and 2013 which were of significant benefit to women, children and families. Others included funding the equal pay of community sector workers; introducing secure disability service funding; significantly increasing pensions; changing the tax-free threshold to benefit women working part-time; enabling the importation of abortion medication RU486 and including it on the pharmaceutical benefits scheme; implementing a national plan to protect women and children from violence and systematically investing in indigenous housing, education, health and employment. A considerable number of these reforms can be attributed to the presence and commitment of such large numbers of progressive women supported into the national parliament by EMILY's List.



Figure 2: A 2013 federal election campaign meme.

EMILY's List in Federal Parliament

When Nancy Astor took up her seat in the British House of Commons in 1919, the *Daily Mail* wrote that it expected a “large increase in the number of women members, where there is so much legislative work for which they are particularly qualified waiting for them to do”.¹² Despite the paper’s confidence, it took many decades for this large increase to occur. Similarly, in Australia, the progress of women becoming members of the national parliament has been slow. After most Australian women won the right to vote in Commonwealth elections in 1902,²² it was not until 1943 that Enid Lyons became the first woman elected to the House of Representatives.²³ In 1980, women made up three per cent of the lower house and 11% of the Senate chamber.²⁴

A study of women candidates for the 1982 Victorian state election found that most “experienced conflict between campaigning whilst meeting their family and childcare responsibilities”.²⁵ Women candidates said they had to contend with “weaker access to established power networks... lack of accumulated income”, and the strain of juggling campaigning with family responsibilities”.²⁶ Kay Setches and Joan Kirner (both elected at the 1982 Victorian poll) were well aware of these barriers to women’s electoral participation. They, and such other progressive Labor women as Leonie Morgan, Helen Creed and Candy Broad, established EMILY’s List as a vehicle to provide women with the financial and moral support needed to enter parliament. In the years since, EMILY’s List has raised more than \$4.5 million to provide progressive women candidates with funding to assist them while campaigning and access to mentoring, training and political networks. Of these candidates, more than 155 have been elected to Australian parliaments. As a result, EMILY’s List can be seen to have played a key role in increasing the number of female ALP House of Representative candidates from 20.3% in 1996 to 31.3% in the 2010 election.²⁷

At the 2007 election of the Rudd Government, 27 Labor women MPs were elected or re-elected with EMILY’s List support (see Appendix 1 and 2 for a list of EL-supported women MPs and Ministers between 2007 and 2013). Five became Ministers - Julia Gillard (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and Social Inclusion), Jenny Macklin (Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs), Penny Wong (Minister for Climate Change and Water), Tanya Plibersek (Minister for Housing and the Status of Women) and Justine Elliott (Minister for Ageing). At the 2010 election – the first in Australian history to elect a female prime minister - 21 candidates and MPs were successful with EMILY’s List’s assistance, which contributed to women making up 36% of the Labor Caucus.²⁸ After the 2010 election, then opposition leader Tony Abbott described EMILY’s List as “arguably Labor’s most powerful faction”.²⁹ A ministerial reshuffle in December 2011 led to the appointment of five female Cabinet Ministers - the highest number of women in Cabinet in Australian political history. Four of them - Julia Gillard, Penny Wong, Tanya Plibersek and Jenny Macklin were EMILY’s List members. At the same time, Julie Collins joined the outer ministry as Minister responsible for Community Services; Indigenous Employment and Economic Development and the Status of Women.

Case study: Julia Gillard

Giving the inaugural EMILY's List Oration in 2011, Julia Gillard said that she was proud to have been part of a government which "introduced Paid Parental Leave, increased the Child Care Rebate and put WorkChoices in the dustbin of history".³⁰

She said she was also proud to lead a government committed to a National Disability Insurance Scheme, lifting universal superannuation and recognising community sector work through equal pay.

"These are great reforms. They will touch every Australian woman in some way, and they are enduring proof that good government really can change lives."³¹

Gillard said that EMILY's List and the Labor Government had "sought to bring issues like child care and domestic violence to public attention, not just as women's issues but as issues affecting the whole community".³²

On Gillard: "With fellow EMILY's Listers in her cabinet, Gillard also used her time as PM to ensure that caring for the young, old and people with disabilities – responsibilities borne traditionally by women – became a shared responsibility of the nation."³³

Legislative Achievements

“EMILY’s List is built on a foundation of five key principles – Choice, Child Care, Diversity, Equality and Equal Pay”.³⁴ Women candidates and MPs who become EMILY’s List members and receive the organisation’s support are required to actively pursue these principles in parliament. “It is their responsibility to take on these issues once they are in Canberra”.³⁵ This report will now look at the successful role played by EMILY’s List members in bringing about legislative reform in these key areas between 2007 and 2013.

Choice

*We believe women must have control over their own bodies and choices in their lives. Reproductive Freedom empowers women and men to choose if, when and how to begin the important journey into parenthood, without fear of discrimination, coercion or violence.*³⁶

While the “legality or otherwise of abortion is determined at the state government level”,³⁷ the Australian Government plays a key role in the affordability and accessibility of reproductive choice through such vehicles as Medicare and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.³⁸ In 1996, the Howard Government amended the Therapeutic Goods Act to require ministerial approval for the importation of RU486 and other similar abortion drugs and introduced AusAID family planning guidelines which prevented Australian-funded family planning agencies in developing countries from providing advice or counselling on safe abortions.³⁹

EMILY’s List women parliamentarians were instrumental in the Labor Government repealing both of these measures. Former EL national co-convenor, Senator Claire Moore, was one of four women senators who co-sponsored the introduction of the *Therapeutic Goods Amendment (Repeal of Ministerial responsibility for approval of RU486) Bill* in 2005. Senator Moore told Parliament that the bill would ensure that the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), rather than members of parliament, was responsible for considering the “safety, efficacy and quality”⁴⁰ of RU486 (a synthetic steroid that can be used to induce medical abortions as an alternative to surgical termination⁴¹). Senator Moore was also deputy chair of the Senate inquiry into the Bill, which included contributions from EL-supported Senators Penny Wong, Kate Lundy, Anne McEwen, Jan McLucas and Ruth Webber. Passage of the bill meant that Australian women could, in restricted circumstances, gain access to such medication as an alternative to surgery.

This meant reduced out of pocket medical expenses and other potential costs such as travel and accommodation.⁴² In August 2013, EL-supported Health Minister Tanya Plibersek moved to ensure that the drug also became affordable by placing it on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. “Making reproductive choice affordable for all Australian women, to me that is huge” said EL national coordinator Lisa Carey⁴³.

The Labor Government’s 2009 move to repeal the ban on AusAID funding to support family planning and safe abortion assistance in developing nations was lauded by International Women’s Development Agency Executive Director, Jane Sloane, who said it would “save lives and ensure that women were supported with information and services to reduce the incidence of maternal deaths”.⁴⁴ In its 2008/09 Annual Report, EMILY’s List thanked “EMILY’s List Federal MPs, the cross-party Parliamentary Group on Population and Development and in particular EMILY’s List National Co-Convenor, Senator Claire Moore, for their advocacy and work in the caucus and in the community on securing this victory for global women’s rights”.⁴⁵ EMILY’s List had maintained strong opposition to the ban, saying it was “directly responsible for contributing to the further death and poor health outcomes for women in developing countries”.⁴⁶



Figure 3: A 2013 federal election campaign meme.

Case study: Jenny Macklin

As a Minister between 2007 and 2013, Jenny believes her most significant achievements included overseeing the apologies to the Stolen Generations and the Forgotten Generation⁴⁷ and "five years of consistent national, properly funded policy"⁴⁸ in the areas of indigenous housing, health, education and employment.

As Minister for Disability Reform, Jenny also helped steer through the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme in 2013.

On Macklin: "Jenny is a leading Labor figure in the areas of Indigenous reconciliation, fairness for people with a disability and support for Australian families. This year she passed the National Disability Insurance Scheme into law, a once-in-a-generation reform that will benefit enormous sections of our community".⁴⁹

Child Care

We believe work-life balance is crucial to women, men and families. For women and men to achieve fulfilment professionally and personally, they need affordable, quality, flexible childcare for their children.⁵⁰

Between 2007 and 2013, the Labor governments introduced a raft of reforms of the Australian early childhood sector aimed at both increasing the range and quality of child care services and the delivery of financial assistance to families using such services while working or studying. From 2008, quality child care was made more affordable by the Government increasing the child care tax rebate from 30% to 50% of out of pocket expenses.⁵¹ This reform - designed to deliver benefits of between \$500 and \$2,500 per year to Australian families⁵² - was credited with helping some 700,000 families by 2011/12.⁵³ Members of parliament and staff working in Parliament House, Canberra, were also assisted by the 2008 establishment of an on-site child care centre. This initiative was strongly supported by EMILY's List MPs.

To improve the quality of child care and "provide peace of mind to parents as they return to work,"⁵⁴ the Government announced in 2010/2011 that it would invest more than \$270 million to support the introduction of a National Quality Framework.⁵⁵ This meant that Australia's early childhood education and child care providers would be assessed against national quality standards for the first time. It would also require child care providers to deliver better staff: child ratios and improve staff qualifications and led to a mandatory requirement that kindergartens provide three hours a week of extra education for four year olds.⁵⁶ To further assist working families, the Government allocated \$6.4 million over three years to trial the delivery of child care outside traditional operating hours.⁵⁷ "By assisting parents in balancing work and family commitments, the initiative will support the improved workforce participation of primary carers of children, who are often women."⁵⁸ Welcoming the trial, EL-supported Senator Kate Lundy said she was "proud to be part of a government that understands the stress that parents face every day when they are rushing out the door to collect their children from school and I know that this additional funding will be extremely welcome by the sector that works so hard for our children".⁵⁹



Figure 4: A 2013 federal election campaign meme.

Diversity

*We believe democracy is enhanced through the diversity of people participating in it. More women in parliament, on corporate boards and in our courts lead to greater diversity of views and therefore better public policy outcomes.*⁶⁰

Achieving equal representation for women in parliament is one of EMILY's List's key tenets. "There is one very simple reason why gender equity is important and that is democracy. If we are truly a democratic nation, it is important for all views to be represented".⁶¹ EL founding members were "fundamental"⁶² in the Australian Labor Party integrating affirmative action into its national platform in 1994. Originally set at women being preselected in 35% of all winnable state and federal seats by 2002, this target was later amended to 40% by 2012.⁶³ The party is now committed to all ALP and trade union positions being held by 40% men; 40% women and 20% either gender.⁶⁴ These targets assisted in increasing the proportion of Labor women federally from 14.5% in 1994 to 35.6% in 2011,⁶⁵ with EL co-convenor EL co-convenor Tanja Kovac saying that the affirmative action rule had "transformed the Australian Parliament, increasing women's representation by 110% and delivering a raft of public policy reforms that have benefited Australian women".⁶⁶

The positive impact of EMILY's List and others' efforts to increase the representation of progressive women within the ALP was also acknowledged by a 2012 UN report, which said that the affirmative action policy and EMILY's List "demonstrate how a combination of concerted strategies can bring about increased women's political leadership and gender sensitive policies".⁶⁷ The report also found that the involvement of a greater number of ALP women MPs had "changed the legislative priorities of the Labor Party".⁶⁸ Labor had "successfully fought for women's health programs, adult education for women, anti-domestic violence laws, parental leave practices and pay equity legislation"⁶⁹ and, in doing so, had changed the perception of these from women's issues to "social policies with relevance for all of Australian society".⁷⁰

EMILY's List-supported Ministers Penny Wong and Julie Collins were able to apply a successful EMILY's List and Australian Labor affirmative action strategy to make Australian Government boards more representative. They set a target of reaching 40:40:20 representation on Government boards by 2015. Just prior to the 2013 election, they were able to report that this target had been reached two years ahead of schedule.⁷² Collins said this target had been set because "gender balance on boards improves governance, leads to better informed public policy and stronger economic outcomes".⁷³ Further, Senator Wong was able to establish through the Department of Finance the Boardlinks network to provide more opportunities for women to go onto boards, further their directorship careers and increase the number of potential women candidates for government boards.

Equity

*We strongly believe in the right of every woman to enjoy equal rights and privileges before the law, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity. This is because equality is a fundamental human right that should be enjoyed by all.*⁷⁴

Between 2007 and 2013, EL-supported women MPs played a significant role in guiding through legislative change to eliminate discrimination related to sexual orientation and gender identity and to promote equal opportunity for women in Australian workplaces. In her valedictory speech, Senator Trish Crossin, a former EMILY's List co-convenor, cited initiating a review of the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* "which led to some major amendments to this legislation"⁷⁵ as one of the key achievements of her 15 years in the Senate. Crossin was chair of the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee (and EL-supported Senator Louise Pratt a member) which recommended the final amendments to the *Sex Discrimination Amendment (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Intersex Status) Bill 2013* ultimately passed in June 2013. This Bill was designed to amend the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* to "extend protection from discrimination to the new grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status".⁷⁶ EL-supported Senator Penny Wong said the legislation would "make compliance easier, reduce costs and shift the focus from redressing wrongs to preventing discrimination from occurring in the first place".⁷⁷

With gender inequality in the workplace considered a "significant disincentive to women's workforce participation"⁷⁸, two EL-supported MPs, Tanya Plibersek and Julie Collins, who held the position of Minister for Status of Women consecutively, worked hard to bring about the passage of the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012. The Act is designed to improve gender equality in the workplace, including remuneration, and support employers to remove barriers to women's equal participation.⁷⁹ Collins said the legislation would "go a long way to promoting the cultural change necessary to create true gender equality in our workplaces".⁸⁰ Workplace gender equality researcher Sara Charlesworth wrote shortly before the 2013 election that "under Labor some serious steps have been taken to develop some important gender equality infrastructure".⁸¹

As Health Minister, Plibersek - with the support of another EL member, Human Services Minister Jan McLucas - moved to eliminate all gender discrimination from Medicare services to ensure that transgender and intersex people would no longer have to disclose or explain their gender to receive medical treatment or rebates for treatment.⁸² "If you need a medical treatment under Medicare you should be able to get it without a discussion about or disclosure of your gender - male, female, transgender or otherwise".⁸³ Gina Wilson, president of Organisation Intersex International Australia, described these changes as a "huge step forward".⁸⁴

Equal Pay

*The difference in the nature and way women work, including time out for caring, should not lead to significantly lower wages or superannuation for women.*⁸⁵

On 10 November 2011, Prime Minister Gillard announced that the Government would allocate over \$2 billion to fund pay rises to 150,000 social and community sector workers.⁸⁶ About 120,000 of these workers were women. This commitment was made in support of the joint argument put to Fair Work Australia by the Government and the Australian Services Union that workers in this sector had been “underpaid for too long because their work was viewed as women’s work”.⁸⁷ Fair Work Australia had, the year prior, found that social and community sector employees were receiving less pay than state and local government workers doing similar work and that gender had been “important in creating the gap”.⁸⁸

The equal pay case was made possible by the Labor Government removing barriers to pay equity claims in its *Fair Work Act 2009*.⁸⁹ A House of Representatives pay equity inquiry (chaired by EL-supported MP Sharryn Jackson and including long-time EL members Sharon Bird and Jill Hall) found that while Australia’s gender pay gap had previously been similar to other comparable OECD countries, it had increased to the point where it needed to be “addressed as a matter of urgency if Australia is to realise its full economic potential”.⁹⁰ The Australian Centre for Leadership for Women supported the need for urgent reform, saying that addressing the issue of pay equity was the only way to “make real progress in advancing the status of women in the workplace”.⁹¹ After Fair Work Australia announced that social and community sector workers would be awarded wage rises of up to 41%,⁹² Prime Minister Gillard said the result was “the first ever successful pay equity claim in the national system and a significant advance for equal pay for women”.⁹³

Case study: Tanya Plibersek

As Minister for Housing, Tanya delivered significant new investments in affordable housing and a comprehensive, national strategy to tackle homelessness.

As Minister for the Status of Women, she oversaw development of the *National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children*, while as Minister for Health she made major changes to ensure that private health insurance was affordable and equitable.

On 13 October 2013, she became deputy ALP leader and deputy opposition leader.

On Tanya: “During Tanya’s term as Health Minister, RU486 has been listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, which has made the cost of medical abortions affordable for everyone. Given that a woman’s right to choose is one of EMILY’s List’s key policy platforms, the work done by Tanya on this issue has been invaluable.”⁹⁸

The Labor governments also made significant changes to superannuation and taxation to benefit women “who have significantly lower superannuation balances as a result of pay inequities and broken work patterns to accommodate caring responsibilities”.⁹⁴ These changes included providing a rebate on contributions by low-income workers - Minister for the Status of Women, Tanya Plibersek, estimated that 60% of who would be women.⁹⁵ Increasing the superannuation guarantee rate from 9% to 12% from July 2013 would also increase the super balances of some four million women workers in 2013/2014.⁹⁶ Finance Minister Penny Wong said such reforms would mean “fewer barriers and more opportunities for women at all stages of their lives”.

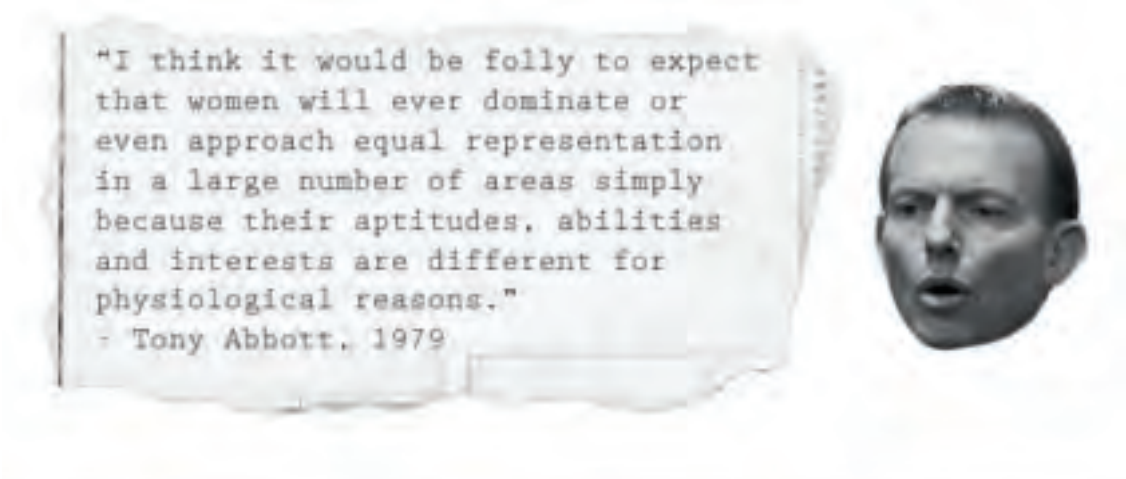


Figure 5: A 2013 federal election campaign meme.



Figure 6: A 2013 federal election campaign meme.

Conclusion

EMILY's List was established in 1996 by a group of "progressive Labor women passionate about increasing women's representation and rights in Australia".⁹⁹ With the mantra "When Women Support Women, Women Win,"¹⁰⁰ the organisation aims to not only increase the number of women in Australian parliaments, but to also increase the number of women advocating for the issues at the organisation's core: equality, diversity, pay equity, affordable child care and reproductive choice. "A critical mass of women is vital, but what is also important is that the women who enter Parliament are serious about progressive policy development. EMILY's List expects its supported Members of Parliament to be advocates for change that benefits women and benefits communities."¹⁰¹ Between 2007 and 2013, EMILY's List-supported members played a key role in making "the voices of women heard on important issues".¹⁰² As members of the federal parliament, they were part of the largest ever concentration of women in a major political party and in Cabinet. This meant they were able to play a key role in an administration which, despite being a minority government for several years, oversaw a "raft of really important legislation,"¹⁰³ particularly in areas of benefit to women, children and families. The impact of so many EMILY's List-supported women members of parliament and Cabinet can clearly be seen in this legislative reform program. The effect of having a single woman Cabinet member in the recently-elected Coalition Government remains to be seen.

Acknowledgments

EMILY's List co-convenor Tanja Kovac and national coordinator Lisa Carey agreed to this university placement despite it occurring in the lead-up to, and during, the 2013 federal election campaign. I thank them for providing me with this opportunity and for their time and support throughout the placement.

I am also very grateful for the enthusiastic response to my placement from Joan Kirner, Kay Setches and Leonie Morgan. All were as generous as ever in their support and assistance in preparing this report.

Thanks also to Mary Crooks for her time and contribution and Janet Wilson, Australian Parliamentary Library researcher, whose own work and advice were invaluable resources.

And thank you to all the EMILY's List-supported members of parliament for their assistance in carrying out this research but, more importantly, for their commitment to achieving legislative change of benefit to women, children and families.



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Appendix 1: EMILY's List supported women MPs 2007-2013

House of Representatives

Sharon Bird 2004-
Gai Brodtmann 2010-
Jodie Campbell 2007-2010
Julie Collins 2007-
Annette Ellis – 1996-2010
Justine Elliot 2004-
Jennie George 2001-2010
Julia Gillard 1998-2013
Sharon Grierson 2001-2013
Jill Hall 1998-
Julia Irwin 1998-2010
Sharryn Jackson 2007-2010
Catherine King 2001-
Kirsten Livermore 1998-2013
Jenny Macklin 1996-
Julie Owens 2004-
Melissa Parke 2007-
Tanya Plibersek 1998-
Kerry Rea 2007-2010
Janelle Saffin 2007-2013
Laura Smyth 2010-2013

Senate

Carol Brown 2005-
Trish Crossin 1998-2013
Sue Lines 2012 –
Kate Lundy 1996-
Anne McEwen 2005-
Jan McLucas 1999-
Claire Moore 2002-
Louise Pratt 2008-
Lisa Singh 2011 -
Lin Thorp 2012-2013
Anne Urquhart 2011-
Ruth Webber 2002-2008
Penny Wong 2002-

Sources:

- Senators and Members, Parliament of Australia website, http://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members
- Our Women in Parliament, EMILY's List website, <http://www.emilyslist.org.au/our-women/emilys-list-australia-current-members-of-parliament>

Appendix 2: EMILY's List supported women in ministries, 2007 - 2013

Sharon Bird: Parliamentary Secretary for Higher Education and Skills, 2012-13; Minister for Higher Education and Skills 2013; Regional Development 2013; Regional Communications 2013; Road Safety 2013.

Julie Collins: Parliamentary Secretary for Community Services 2010-2011; Minister for Community Services, Indigenous Employment and Economic Development; Status of Women 2011-2013; Housing and Homelessness 2013.

Justine Elliot: Minister for Ageing 2007-2010, Parliamentary Secretary for Trade 2010-2013.

Julia Gillard: Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Education; Employment and Workplace Relations; Social Inclusion 2007- 2010, Prime Minister 2010-2013.

Catherine King: Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Ageing 2010-2013; Infrastructure and Transport 2010-2013; Minister for Regional Services, Local Communities and Territories 2013; Road Safety 2013; Regional Australia, Local Government and Territories 2013.

Kate Lundy: Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister 2010-2012; Immigration and Citizenship 2010-2011; Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 11-12; Minister for Sport 2012-2013; Multicultural Affairs 2012-2013; Minister Assisting for Industry and Innovation 2012-2013; Innovation and Industry 2013; Digital Economy 2013.

Jan McLucas: Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing 2007- 2009; Disabilities and Carers 2010- 2013; to the Prime Minister 2012-2013; Minister for Human Services 2013.

Jenny Macklin: Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs 2007- 2011; Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs; Disability Reform 2011-2013.

Melissa Parke: Parliamentary Secretary for Mental Health 2013; Homelessness and Social Housing 2013; Minister for International Development 2013.

Tanya Plibersek: Minister for Housing; Status of Women 2007- 2010; Human Services 2010-2011; Social Inclusion 2010-2011; Health 2011-2013; Health and Medical Research 2013.

Penny Wong: Minister for Climate Change and Water 2007-2010; Climate Change, Energy Efficiency and Water 2010; Finance and Deregulation 2010-2013.

Source: Senators and Members, Parliament of Australia, http://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members



Appendix 3: Legislation and policy initiatives 2007 2013

Issues	Policy Initiatives	Legislation
Carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for Grandparent carers peer support groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carer Recognition Act 2010
Child Sexual Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Royal Commission into institutional responses to child sexual abuse 	
Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established a National Children's Commissioner to promote awareness of human rights of children in Australia. Better start for children with a disability initiative Supporting families with autistic children. Better school funding plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian Human Rights Commission Amendment (National Children's Commissioner) Act 2012
Disability funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of a national disability insurance scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 DisabilityCare Australia Fund Act 2013
Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achievement of 40:40:20 representation of women on Australian Government boards two years ahead of schedule Creation of Boardlinks – to increase the number of women on boards. 	
Early childhood education and child care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tax rebate increased from 30 to 50% of out of pocket expenses from July 2008 Jobs, Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance extended to two years Funding to introduce a National Quality Framework for early childhood education and child care Three year trial of child care outside traditional operating hours Establishment of a Parliament House child care centre Delivery of universal access to early childhood education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care Budget and Other Measures) Act 2008 Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care Rebate) Act 2011 Family Assistance and Other Legislation Amendment (Child Care and Other Measures) Act 2011 Early Years Quality Fund Special Account Act 2013

Issues	Policy Initiatives	Legislation
Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elimination of discrimination against same sex couples • Elimination of discrimination on the basis of disability, sexual orientation or identity • Elimination of all Medicare gender references • Improved gender pay equity and elimination of discrimination in workplaces on the basis of family responsibilities • Creation of age discrimination commissioner within the Australian Human Rights Commission and appointment of Susan Ryan as Commissioner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same-Sex Relationships (Equal Treatment in Commonwealth Laws—General Law Reform) Act 2008 • Disability Discrimination and Other Human Rights Legislation Amendment Act 2009 • Sex Discrimination Amendment (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Intersex Status) Bill 2013 • Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012
Families – financial assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases to family tax benefits • Implementation of new Schoolkids Bonus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and Other Legislation Amendment (2008 Budget and Other Measures) Act 2008 • Household Stimulus Package Act (No. 2) 2009 • Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and Other Legislation Amendment (Election Commitments and Other Measures) Act 2011 • Family Assistance and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2011 • Family Assistance and Other Legislation Amendment (Schoolkids Bonus Budget Measures) Act 2012 • Family Assistance and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2012
Families – working and studying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 weeks paid parental leave for primary carers from 1 January 2011 • Two weeks paid leave for eligible working fathers and partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe Work Australia Act 2008 • Tax Bonus for Working Australians Act (No. 2) 2009 • Paid Parental Leave Act 2010 • Paid Parental Leave and Other Legislation Amendment (Dad and Partner Pay and Other Measures) Bill 2012

Issues	Policy Initiatives	Legislation
Family Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2010-2022 • \$12.5 million investment in the 1800RESPECT National Helpline to provide free, online professional counselling service 	
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Women's Health Policy 2010 – priority areas: prevention of chronic disease; mental health and wellbeing; sexual and reproductive health and healthy ageing • \$4.1 billion means tested dental care program for children and low income workers • \$500m for public dental health reforms • Private health insurance rebate for high income taxpayers reduced. • Established the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care • Mental health policy and after policy reforms • Rural health initiatives including: \$14.3 for the Royal Flying Doctor Service to facilitate the provision of female GPs to communities that have little or no access to a woman GP; and Rural Nurses Locum Scheme - \$28.8million to support 750 locum places per year to enable rural based nurses to professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Health Reform Act 2011 • National Health and Hospital Network Act 2011 • Fairer Private Health Insurance Incentives Act 2012
Indigenous women and children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing the Gap project – sustained funding in the areas of indigenous health, education and employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Recognition Act 2013

Issues	Policy Initiatives	Legislation
International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) - ratification of the optional protocol to allow women to complain about Australian violations (2008) • United Nations Security Council membership and plans to use this to focus on the impact of war and armed conflict on women. • Elimination of violence against women including \$96.4million over 4 years for support services for Pacific women • National policing strategy and Support for Victims of People Trafficking Program to prevent people trafficking. 	
Pay equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to equal pay principles (Fair Work Act 2009) • \$2 billion to fund equal pay rises for social and community sector workers • Creation of pay equity unit within Fair Work Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social and Community Services Pay Equity Special Account Act 2012
Reproductive Choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009 repeal of the ban on AusAID funding to support family planning and safe abortion assistance in developing nations • Inclusion of RU486 on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme 	
Women's Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$200,000 to partner with the Australian Institute of Company Directors to address the low participation of women on boards. • Support for the Rural Industries Research Development Corporation Rural Women's Award. • Additional funding for six national Women's Alliances 	

Issues	Policy Initiatives	Legislation
Women's financial security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressive increase of superannuation guarantee rate to 12% • Rebate on superannuation contributions by low-income earners • Abolition of the superannuation guarantee maximum age limit • Tripling of the tax-free threshold • Biggest reforms of the pension system in its history • Phasing out of the dependent spouse tax offset which acted as a disincentive for low income married women to enter the workforce or increase participation • Increasing of the Medicare levy low-income thresholds • Increased and new assistance for pensioners, self-funded retirees, families and aged-care residents • Strengthening compliance for child support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same-Sex Relationships (Equal Treatment in Commonwealth Laws - Superannuation) Act 2008 • Clean Energy (Tax Laws Amendments) Act 2011 • Clean Energy (Household Assistance Amendment) Act 2011 • Superannuation Guarantee (Administration) Amendment Act 2012 • Superannuation Legislation Amendment (Stronger Super) Act 2012
Workplace relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abolition of WorkChoices, introduction of national employment standards and right to request flexible work. • Extension of protections to outworkers • Strategies to increase women's workforce participation after early parenting. • Review of the Australian Defence Force Academy, the Australian Defence Force and defence culture to ensure better and safer pathways for women. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair Work Act 2009 • Fair Work Amendment (Textile, Clothing and Footwear Industry) Act 2012

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