

## 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2012 Media Release: Premier Called To Act on Violence

Victorian Premier Ted Baillieu is being called upon to take a leading role in the Government's strategies addressing violence against women.

Women's and community sector organisations believe strong and inspirational political leadership from the very top is needed to bring about an effective whole-of-government response on the problem of violence, and in particular, men's violence against women and children.

"By taking on this responsibility and working with Minister Mary Wooldridge, Premier Baillieu would send an important and much needed message to the community that male leaders such as himself and his colleagues are prepared to put men's violence towards women and girls at the forefront of public policy and Government responses," Victorian Women's Trust Executive Director Mary Crooks said.

The call for top level political leadership around violence comes before these groups respond to the Government's draft Action Plan Consultation Framework to 'Address Violence Against Women and Their Children'.

"The Premier could take the lead on this issue, by chairing an inter-departmental committee set-up to implement the Action Plan, led by Minister Wooldridge," Ms Crooks explained.

The agencies believe that the Premier taking on a lead role on the issue with Premier and Cabinet would lead to a more concerted effort in delivering a whole-of-government response. It would require the Premier speaking out more on the issue, supporting Minister Wooldridge in delivering a well-resourced Action Plan that makes a real difference – with all Ministers working together on the issue.

The agencies argue this whole-of-government response requires several departments working together.

"Whole of Government means exactly that. The Office of Women's Policy, the Departments of Justice and Health, as well as others, like the Departments of Housing (family violence precipitates homelessness), Sport and Recreation (facilitating prevention programs), and Industrial Relations (given the cost of violence on the economy and how workplaces can respond)," Women's Domestic Crisis Service Victoria's CEO Deb Bryant explained.

The agencies argue the issue needs urgent attention in light of recent crime statistics.

"The latest Victoria Police statistics show an increase in reports of sexual assault and family violence, with huge social and economic costs. It is crucial that the Baillieu Government seizes the opportunity to bring into being a strong and robust framework that addresses men's violence against women at all levels," Women's Health Victoria's Executive Director Rita Butera said.

The groups believe Victoria has a chance to demonstrate a truly integrated approach, with the Premier taking a more active role and all Ministers and Departments working together to address the problem.

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### **This Media Release has the support of:**

The Victorian Women's Trust, Women's Health Victoria, Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service Victoria, Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria (DVRCV), Domestic Violence Victoria (DV Vic), Women's Legal Service Victoria, The Federation of Community Legal Centres, Project Respect Koorie Women Mean Business, YWCA Victoria, Council of Single Mothers Victoria, WIRE-Women's Information and Women with Disabilities Victoria.

**Organisations in Support:**



**The Victorian Women's Trust**

**Executive Director Mary Crooks**



**Women's Health  
Victoria**

**Executive Director Rita Butera**

**Women's Health Victoria**



**Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service Vic**

**CEO Deb Bryant**



**Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria**

**Executive Officer Virginia Geddes**



**Domestic Violence Victoria (DV Vic)**

**Chief Executive Officer  
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**Women's Legal Service Victoria**

**Chief Executive Officer Joanna Fletcher**



**The Federation of Community Legal Centres**

**Policy Officer Dr. Chris Atmore**



**Project Respect**

**Executive Director Kelly Hinton**



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**Executive Director Leanne Miller**



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jo Watson'.

**Chief Executive Officer Jo Watson**



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jane Stanley'.

**Council of Single Mothers Victoria**

**Executive Director Jane Stanley**



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Samiro Douglas'.

**Executive Director Samiro Douglas**



**Executive Director Keran Howe**