

# PRESS FOR PROGRESS

## a woman's place is in her union



International Women's Day



### **Changing the Rules for a better life for working women**

Changing the rules around work for women continues to be a major focus for Queensland unions.

Queensland Council of Unions General Secretary Ros McLennan says International Women's Day today (8 March) is an opportunity to highlight how the work-life collision of juggling paid work and family responsibilities disproportionately impacts women.

Unions will intensify campaigning to tackle issues like the gender pay gap, reduced penalty rates, insecure work, inadequate retirement savings and domestic violence leave.

"It is 2018 and women now make up 47 per cent of Australia's workforce yet

there is still a lot more to be done for Australian women to be equal in the workplace,” said Ms McLennan.

“Average full-time earnings are 15.3 per cent less for women than men.

“Average superannuation balances for women upon retirement are a shocking 42 per cent less for women than for men,” she said.

Ms McLennan said women took on the majority of the work caring for young children, elderly parents or family members with an illness or disability.

“Shouldering these unpaid responsibilities has long term, negative consequences for a woman’s lifetime earnings, job security, career path and retirement savings.

“Women already represent the majority of low-paid, award dependent workers with less bargaining power in the workplace. It’s time to change the rules for women workers,” she said.

In the current system, part-time and casual work is structured for the benefit of employers not workers. The lack of access to flexible working hours plays a large role in the continuing gender pay gap, discrimination during pregnancy and on return to work with high levels of occupational downgrading.

“Queensland Unions are part of a national campaign to change the rules around work, so that women have fairer pay, penalty rates are protected, jobs are more secure, and retirement savings are improved.”

Ms McLennan said women across the workforce faced challenges of low pay, insecure work and career advancement opportunity.

“Only 16.7 per cent of chief executive officers are women and only one in four of directors of Australia’s largest companies are women. Women make up just one-third of our federal parliament,” she said.

“Unions will continue to fight for equality for women workers.

“Union women have a strong history of fighting for their sisters, and women now comprise 52 per cent of union members in Australia,” she said.

“And in this state, a QCU-affiliated union with predominantly female members – the Queensland Nurses and Midwives Union – continues to grow and achieve great progress for its members,” she said.

“International Women’s Day is a time to celebrate our achievements but also reflect on what is still to be done to build a better life for women workers and their families.”

Posted by the QCU Thursday 8 March 2018

A copy of the original article can be found by [clicking here.](#)