**Supporting Working Parents: Pregnancy and Return to Work National Review**

Submissions from women and men who have experienced discrimination at work while pregnant, or while on or on return to work after taking parental leave

**Submission Number: 187**

**Part C Submission Response**

I work for the Australian government as a full time permanent employee. My manager was supportive while I was pregnant and allowed me to work from home as I had continual morning sickness for 8 months. My manager was also supportive of part-time arrangements when I was ready to return to work. However, my 'temporary maternity replacement' was kept on after I returned to work, and I was not returned to my role as office manager even when I went full-time. I was left to complete a major policy paper with no support staff.

I also experienced problems when it came to discretionary decisions by my manager. For example, I had to travel interstate for a 3-day meeting. I was still breast feeding my 7-month old which meant taking baby overnight. I couldn't get a babysitter so I paid my husband's and toddler's airfares and travel costs. On the Friday the meeting finished at 4pm so we stayed that night before returning home. My manager made me pay back accommodation costs, and disregarded the fact I would have had to check out my family by 10am, then have them wait in mid-winter Melbourne all day before we flew home to arrive by 9pm. It may seem like a minor issue, but I felt my professional integrity was being questioned, and that I should have put my baby and 3-year old out on the street for 7 hours to save my company $200. Shortly after that I suffered severe post-natal depression and had to take several months off work.

My manager has two young children the same age as mine. He is constantly working long hours, including nights and weekends, which places an unwritten expectation that somehow I should do the same.