**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: 61**

**Part C Submission Response**

Throughout my pregnancy I suffered with tremendous morning sickness, and repeatedly requested some flexibility with regards to working hours, as I had been placed on a standard hours arrangement. My requests were declined by both the state Director and the Assistant Secretary, when I gave an example of two occasions where I had arrived at work only to spend 10 minutes in the bathroom, I was told to enter the 10 minutes into the timekeeper as Personal Leave, despite explaining to the State Director and Assistant Secretary that the organisation was effectively losing productivity by this action and allowing flexibility would combat this. By the time I commenced Maternity leave, I was taking considerable amounts of Leave Without Pay, as my leave credits had been used.

On one occasion whilst discussing the severity of my morning sickness with the State Director (who does not work from my office), she responded "IF that is actually happening...." this added to my level of stress as she was making it quite clear that she did not believe me (despite many witnesses and having no reason to ever doubt me) this also made me feel quite harassed.

The manner in which I was treated by the State Director caused me to have an extremely stressful pregnancy, I developed high blood pressure (which I had never experienced before) and my obstetrician was concerned that I might suffer a stroke during labor and I required additional treatment measures for this, I have no doubt that this was due to the behaviour of senior staff within the department.

Upon return to work on a part time basis (.5FTE) my workload remained the same as a full time workload, when I asked if this could be reviewed to reflect my reduced hours, I was pressured by both my line manager and State Director to suggest that I could not "handle the workload" this was not the case, I was told the arrangement (or lack thereof) would be reviewed, to date this has not occurred.