



# MEDIA RELEASE

HON ROBERT BROKENSHERE MLC

FAMILY FIRST  
*The Independent Party*



## MUMS AT HOME WORK JUST AS HARD AND DESERVE PAID MATERNITY “LEAVE”

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FAMILY FIRST MLC Robert Brokenshere has today expressed concern that the paid maternity leave debate discriminates against at-home mothers, degrading the value of the work that mothers do in the home maintaining a family and household.

“The concept of a *working mother* degrades the work of mums at home”, Mr Brokenshere said, “FAMILY FIRST believes that at home mums are just as much worth the money for paid maternity ‘leave’ as workforce mums”

Recently the Productivity Commission has proposed that workforce mums receive 4 months’ maternity leave paid for by taxpayers, totalling almost \$13,000. By contrast, at-home mums would receive nothing but the baby bonus of \$5,000.

“This Government is using economic pressure to limit the choices of nursing mothers”, Mr Brokenshere said, “The economic inference that the Government makes is that staying at home with your child is not valued by your country, your country wants you back in the workforce and your 4-month-old child in child care”

Mr Brokenshere recounted recent studies showing that at-home mothers have big workloads and that pushing more mothers back to work earlier had negative impacts:

- US research in 2007 [revealed](#) that a stay-at-home mother was worth \$138,905 USD per annum, working 10 jobs and on average puts in a [92-hour working week](#);
- Pew Research Center [research showed](#) that from 1997 to 2007:
  - **working mothers** were increasingly favouring part-time work and felt badly about their parenting compared to at-home mothers, and
  - **at-home mothers** were increasingly in favour of staying that way and pulling out of full-time work; and
  - amongst the **general population**, 41% believed having more working mothers was a bad thing and 32% said it made no difference, only 22% saying it was a good thing (5% ‘don’t know’)

“How can the Productivity Commission claim that economically forcing mothers to return to work is good for productivity? The stabilising influence of a mother at home in those crucial early years is a choice that should be supported by offering the same 4-month \$13,000 to stay at home mums to workforce-returning mums”