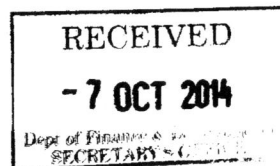




ldm:ljm

Senator the Hon. Ian Macdonald - Liberal - Queensland - LNP
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Ms Jane Hilton
 Secretary
 Department of Finance
 John Gorton Building
 King Edward Terrace
 PARKES ACT 2600



Dear Ms Hilton

Thank you for your letter of 19th September 2014 regarding matters surrounding the non-payment of my wife for work which she does in my office. Your letter misses the point. It seems to me that the inability of my wife to receive payment is discrimination in the workplace and as you are aware, I have reported this to the Fair Work Ombudsman.

You mention in the penultimate paragraph of your letter that "finance is required to administer these arrangements in accordance with the legislation".

I have asked both the Special Minister of State and the Workplace Relations Minister to indicate to me what legislative backing is there for this discriminatory practice. Unfortunately to date I have had no response to that question from either Minister. I have also asked both Ministers to indicate if they have legal advice on this discriminatory practice and again neither Minister has responded.

You indicate that you are responding to my emails of 16th and 24th July and 17th August 2014, but I understand from the Fair Work Ombudsman that you are actually responding as a result of contact that the Ombudsman has made with you.

Thank you for forwarding me voluminous copies of my wife's contracts. This was not necessary as I am well aware of the situation with my wife's employment.

What I find intolerable is that because my wife happens to be married to me, she is unable to be paid for the work which she continues to do for me.

I reiterate that if rather than my wife, I was employing a mistress, that would be in order. It appears that simply because my wife is married to me she is precluded from receiving payment for her work.

No one, including yourself, has given me any explanation for the purpose of this ruling, which I consider to be discriminatory and therefore illegal. If some Members or Senators were rorting the system, then that should be addressed, but in my case my wife works consistently 5 or 6 days a week when I am in Canberra and gets paid for 2. She also works in the electorate office and elsewhere and is my employee of longest standing with the greatest corporate knowledge and is my most trusted and valuable employee.

I note that there are other Members of Parliament who are on different arrangements, who still employ their spouses and other relatives and again this seems to be particularly discriminatory in cases such as mine.

Your letter is dated 19th September but was actually received by me on 29th September. I will copy this letter to the Fair Work Ombudsman and would appreciate if you could respond to me about the matters that I thought the Ombudsman had raised with you, and which I have raised with respective Ministers.

I will copy this letter, as well, to the Special Minister of State and the Work Place Relations Minister.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Macdonald', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ian Macdonald
30th September, 2014

Cc Fair Work Ombudsman, Senator the Hon Michael Ronaldson, Senator the Hon Eric Abetz
