

## Equality for women

### What are people concerned about?

Parliament is not representative of the community – of different class and work backgrounds, educational levels, gender, ethnicity and more. This influences the culture of Parliament and the decisions that are made there.

Women – and their interests – are under-represented in Parliament.

Misogyny in Parliament and a toxic and combative culture are out of step with what Australians expect and means that many women are less likely to get involved. Not only has this meant that the culture and behaviours tend to continue but also that the perspectives of women aren't adequately heard and that decisions made in Parliament often do not adequately address their needs or the inequalities that currently exist.

Too often it appears that lip service is paid to people's concerns, or they are just ignored, rather than taking real action, even when analysis and recommendations such as in the Australian Human Rights Commission's report, Respect@Work, are available.

### What do people think the solutions should be?

Use our votes - elect people who act with respect and integrity and who represent their community.

Respond to existing inequality and women's needs – including using the social and economic changes prompted by COVID as an opportunity to build back more fairly

Change the culture and behaviours in Parliament – leading by example, calling out inappropriate behaviour and setting up systems that will support better ways of working, including responding quickly to the recommendations that will come out of the independent review into Parliamentary workplaces.

More independent voices – ensuring more people in both Houses of Parliament who are not beholden to a political party and will put the interests of their community and the wider public above party interests.

### Therefore, what is proACT calling for?

proACT believes in doing democracy better – acting with respect and integrity, with a wide range of community voices heard and acted on.

proACT calls on our political representatives to take action based on evidence and informed advice – making change that will support women inside and outside Parliament, including implementing all 55 recommendations from the Respect@Work report.

proACT believes that one of the best ways to get action is to vote for community-based independents who are not beholden to party politics – including a centre-progressive Independent Senator for the ACT.