

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S PLAN

Statement by Minister for Women's Interests

MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Women's Interests) [12.10 pm]: I rise to inform the house of the launch of consultations for the state government's women's plan to achieve gender equality in Western Australia. In all aspects of life—from schools, to the workplace, to retirement, and in our homes and communities—every girl and woman has the right to reach her potential. Yet despite some significant advances, women and girls in Western Australia continue to experience barriers in many important aspects of their lives. At over 22 per cent, Western Australia has the worst gender pay gap in the nation, compared with under 15 per cent across Australia. Personal safety and financial security also continue to be important issues facing women.

In order to develop the plan, Western Australian women will have an opportunity to share their aspirations, the challenges they face and the changes they would like to see to remove the barriers to full social and economic participation. I have already heard from many women across Western Australia about how solutions and strategies for them might look quite different depending on their lived experience. Their views will be shaped by the place they live in, the industry they work in, their cultural background, and their age, beliefs and so on.

The Department of Communities is leading the development of a long-term women's plan for Western Australia and consultations across the community. The plan will focus on key issues facing women—health and wellbeing, safety and justice, economic independence, and leadership. Addressing gender inequality will require a sustained and coordinated effort across government, business and the community.

I want to hear from as many women as possible to ensure our plan addresses the issues that are important to all Western Australian women so that we can create a future full of opportunity for all.