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Media Release

Rudd Government Delivers Australia's First Paid Parental Leave Scheme

The Rudd Government has delivered on its 2007 pre-election commitment and will introduce Australia's first paid parental leave scheme.

The Government's scheme provides up to 18 weeks Government-funded parental leave pay at the National Minimum Wage (currently \$570 per week) for eligible parents of children born or adopted on or after 1 January 2011.

"The legislation has now passed its final hurdle in the Senate with majority support," said David Bradbury, Federal Member for Lindsay. "This is a great win for Australian families.

"The Rudd Government's Paid Parental Leave scheme is an historic reform for Australia and demonstrates our ongoing commitment to supporting working families," said Mr Bradbury.

"The Paid Parental Leave scheme will give thousands of new mothers the financial support they need during the most critical time of their child's life.

"This scheme will give parents more time at home, giving their child the best start in life while not increasing the financial burden on Australian businesses," Mr Bradbury said. "This will also allow businesses to retain an increased number of skilled workers.

"The passage of this legislation through Parliament will bring Australia in line with the rest of the developed world and will help increase the number of family-friendly work places across the country.

"I would like to congratulate all those Australians who have campaigned over many years for a national Paid Parental Leave scheme - it has been a great victory," Mr Bradbury said.

To be eligible for the scheme, parents will need to meet a work and income test. The primary carer, usually the mother, will need to have worked around one day a week in

the ten months before the birth, and earned less than \$150,000 in the previous financial year. Only the primary carer's income is counted, not family income.

"Government-funded Paid Parental Leave can be taken in conjunction with, or in addition to, employer provided maternity and other leave," said Mr Bradbury. "Casual and part-time workers, contractors and the self-employed will be eligible for Paid Parental Leave, many for the first time.

"The Government's Paid Parental Leave scheme, unlike Tony Abbott's proposal, has been fully funded and has been passed by the Parliament.

"When in Government, Mr Abbott opposed paid parental leave saying "not over my dead body".

After 12 years of refusing to deliver paid parental leave in government and in light of Mr Abbott's recent admission that not everything he says is the 'gospel truth', Mr Abbott and the Coalition can't be trusted on paid parental leave," Mr Bradbury said.