



DECEMBER 2008  
**EMILY'S** **NOTES**  
EMILY'S LIST AUSTRALIA

## End of Year Message *From the National Co-Convenors*

Dear Member,

2008 has been a hectic and exciting year for EMILY's List. We have worked with EMILY's List MPs to achieve a land mark victory for Victorian women - the decriminalisation of abortion in that state. The long campaign's culmination coincided with 100 years of white women's suffrage in Victoria. We also celebrate the achievements of EMILY's List candidates, in the Northern Territory, Western Australia, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. We commend the Rudd Labor Government's action on social justice, equity and climate change, and hope that they continue with this in the future.

Our priorities for 2009 will include the further implementation of the Strategic Plan. Key projects include the expansion of the Sisters Doing it for Themselves project to increase the participation of indigenous women in public life. We aim to keep the pressure up on the ALP to ensure that women are well represented at the highest levels keeping the pressure up on Affirmative Action. We will implement a project to Foster the Next Generation of women leaders, and continue to advocate for a national paid maternity leave system. The Queensland State Government is scheduled to go to the polls early in 2009 and we wish Premier Anna Bligh and her Labor team the very best for the campaign.

The EMILY's List National Office will shut down for the festive season from Monday 22nd December. Staff will be back on 5th of January, energized for another year of elections, advocacy and events. If you'd like to make it your New Year's Resolution to get active with the EMILY's List Action Group in your state, email Susie in the National Office and we'll pass on your details.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support throughout 2008 - your membership, support and commitment to EMILY's List principles make our work possible. We wish you and your loved ones a safe and happy holiday season and look forward to working with you in 2009.

Warm Regards and Best Wishes,

**Sen. CLAIRE MOORE**  
National Co-Convenor

**MOIRA RAYNER**  
Acting National Co-Convenor

### **CEDAW OPTIONAL PROTOCOL**

Australia begun the process of formally acceding to the Optional Protocol to the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. This will provide Australian women with access to a dispute resolution mechanism at the highest level. EMILY's List commends the Rudd Labor Government for taking this important step.

### **RWANDAN WOMEN MAJORITY IN NEW PARLIAMENT**

On the 15-18 September, women won 45 out of the 80 seats available, making the incoming parliament the first in the world to have women in the majority - 56.2 percent. This outstanding result effectively rebuts outmoded ideas about gender equity and development.

*Thanks to Shirley Randell for pointing out this great news.*

### **THANK YOU STRATEGIC PLAN DONORS**

EMILY's List would like to extend a big thank you to everyone who donated to our strategic plan appeal.

In concrete terms we've launched a new database system which we're beta testing at the moment. We hope to have it up and running to start the new year with new systems making it easier for you to renew your membership and update your contact details to stay in touch with EMILY's List.

We have also gone ahead with investing in a new payment system which will allow members to renew via direct debit.

Thank you for your generous support!

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# Election 2008 *Update & Report*

## **NORTHERN TERRITORY**

Unfortunately the incredibly tight timelines for the NT election meant that we weren't able to conduct candidate interviews and provide support to women candidates, so we can only imagine how hectic it must have been on the ground! We thank our Northern Territory sisters for their forbearance.

We thank and congratulate Clare Martin on her inspirational work as Chief Minister and wish her the best in her new role. We congratulate EMILY's List members Jane Aargaard, Delia Lawrie and Marion Scrymgour on their excellent re-election campaigns. Alison Anderson and Malarndirri McCarthy were both elected unopposed, and we wish them well for their second terms. We welcome the new member for Nhulunbuy, Lynne Walker to the parliament and congratulate her on a great campaign, minimising the swing away from Labor in a seat with a retiring member. Unfortunately Kerry Sacilotto who despite working very hard for her electorate, lost her seat by just 188 votes our thoughts and best wishes go out to her. We'd also like to send our thanks and best wishes to Senator Trish Crossin for her strength and dignity in handling a very tough set of circumstances as NT branch President.

## **WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

With a fraction more notice in WA, we were able to interview candidates and call for donations. EMILY's List members donated just over \$1800 to EL women candidates in two weeks— we thank you for your generous support!

We congratulate the EMILY's List endorsed candidate Janine Freeman (Nollamara) who was successful in her campaign. Her success brings the number of new women EMILY's List has supported into parliament to 123. Janine joins EMILY's List MPs Carol Martin, Sue Ellery (new leader of the opposition in the upper house), and Sally Talbot in the WA parliament. We celebrate the achievements of members who did not contest the election, Judy Edwards, Jaye Radisich, Sheila Mills and Sheila McHale. EMILY's List also supported a number of unsuccessful candidates – Karen Brown, Kym Endersby, Fiona

Henderson and Louise Savage. We especially acknowledge the work of Di Guise, who narrowly missed out on holding her seat. We commend these wonderful women on their efforts during the campaign, their dedication to promoting social justice and women's rights in the community and wish them the very best for future endeavours.

## **NEW SOUTH WALES - RYDE BY-ELECTION**

EMILY's List congratulates Nicole Campbell for her integrity and courage in an exceptionally difficult set of circumstances. Nicole ran a great campaign in the Ryde by-election in the face of a big swing against the Labor Government. We'd also like to extend our thanks and congratulations to all of those who assisted Nicole on her campaign and the EMILY's List members who sent messages of support and donations on very short notice.

## **AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

The only fixed term election on the calendar for 2008, we thank ACT candidates and activists for their patience! EMILY's List Members, Deputy Chief Minister Katy Gallagher and Mary Porter Member for Ginninderra have been re-elected. We are pleased to announce that they will be joined in the ACT Legislative Assembly by Joy Burch, newly elected member for Brindabella and the 124th woman supported by EMILY's List.

We also celebrate the achievements of our unsuccessful EMILY's List supported candidates who ran strong campaigns and demonstrated their commitment to equity and social justice throughout. Congratulations to Eleanor Bates, Adina Cirson, Louise Crossman, and Tracey Mackey and we wish them the very best for the future.

2008 has been a much busier year on the election front than we anticipated at the start of the year. Thank you to all of those members who volunteered on campaigns, made donations or contacted the candidates to wish them luck – we greatly appreciate your efforts, and we know that our candidates do too!

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## National Labor Women's Network *Conference and Event Reportback*



National Co-Convenor Sen. Claire Moore, and NSW Co-Convenor Lynda Voltz MLC at the National Labor Women's Conference

The NSW EMILY's List event the night before the Australian Labor Women's Network National Conference was a big success. With women from across Australia getting together with our NSW sisters, and hearing and sharing stories from the hustings. Together with great food and lots of laughter, a fantastic night was had by all, as well as sharing the ultimate campaign truth – You haven't doorknocked enough houses if you have yet to see a semi-naked man!

All these tips and stories stood EMILY's Lister Alice Pryor in good stead for her conference session — Campaigning for Women's Success. Conference participants enjoyed a diverse range of informative and entertaining sessions.

*Choice*

*Equity*

*Diversity*

*Equal Pay*

*Childcare*

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# First Speech Gallery

*What new ELMs said*



Louise Pratt  
Senator for WA

“We need governments to address in policy—and promote in their dialogue with citizens—the need to assist individuals and communities in their efforts to overcome barriers to participation. We need governments that recognize that a person’s social vulnerability can increase exponentially when they are disadvantaged on more than one front. Irrespective of an individual’s economic means, geographic location or isolation, level of education, age, disability, mental or physical health, aboriginality, racial or cultural background, religion, level of family support or family structure, experience of trauma, sexuality, gender or gender identity—irrespective of any of these things—everyone has the right to participate fully in our society. And government at all levels has the responsibility to make sure that they can exercise that right. This doesn’t just mean freedom from discrimination; it means active support for the disadvantaged from government, business and the wider community”

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## Abortion Law Reform *In Victoria*

EMILY's List congratulates the Victorian Parliament on the passage of the Abortion Law Reform Bill. We commend the Parliament for harmonising current medical practice, community attitudes and the law. We thank Premier John Brumby, Health Minister Daniel Andrews and Minister for Women's Affairs Maxine Morand for their strong leadership and integrity throughout the contentious debate.

EMILY's List thanks all of the women, and men, from across the political spectrum, who have worked tirelessly in the community and in the Parliament to make the decriminalisation of abortion a reality. This is an historic moment for the recognition of women's rights in Victoria.

We would especially like to thank our pro-choice MPs for their principled stand; their commitment to just and equitable outcomes for all Victorian women, their determination to see the Bill through, their dedication in defeating numerous regressive amendments, and their courage in the face of contemptible tactics from some quarters. We are grateful for their diligence; their thoughtful, measured and articulate contributions to the debate; and their unswerving respect for women and women's right.

EMILY's List believes that this landmark legislation represents a vital shift in the way that our society respects women's ability to make sound decisions about their bodies and their lives. This legislation will mean that women in all areas of Victoria will be able to access safe, legal terminations free from persecution; and medical practitioners will be able to provide vital reproductive health services to women free from harassment.

It is our firm belief that the strong and increasing representation of women in the Parliament has made reform to Victoria's abortion laws possible. Women MPs advocating for the women's reproductive rights put decriminalisation on the agenda and were instrumental at every stage of Abortion Law Reform Bills development. We are especially grateful to Candy Broad MLC for her bravery in putting forward the Private Member's Bill last year, which set the scene for referral to the Victorian Law Reform Commission, and galvanised the Parliamentary process.

EMILY's List thanks all of those organisations and individuals who worked so productively together to bring about abortion law reform. We would particularly like to acknowledge former Premier and National Co-Convenor of EMILY's Joan Kirner for her inspirational leadership on this issue.

### CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS - FINANCE COMMITTEE

EMILY's List is seeking volunteers to join our finance committee—the committee is responsible for administering the EMILY's List budget, and reports directly to National Committee. This would be a great opportunity to share your existing skills to assist EMILY's List balance our budget and grow and expand into the future.

<i>Choice</i>	<i>Equity</i>	<i>Diversity</i>	<i>Equal Pay</i>	<i>Childcare</i>
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# Draft Report on *Paid Parental Leave*

EMILY's List has welcomed the Productivity Commissions' recommendation of 18 weeks of leave for new mothers and calls on the Rudd Labor Government to introduce paid maternity leave in the next Federal Budget.

The provision of paid maternity leave is integral to fair and equitable workplaces and we believe that the model put forward in the draft report is a positive one. We were particularly pleased to see that the recommendations are well above the minimum standards suggested by the ILO. EMILY's List was also pleased with the Commission's attention to the realities of working women's lives, through the inclusion of part time, casual, contract and self-employed workers in the paid maternity leave proposal. We commend the Commission for acknowledging the diversity of contemporary Australian families by proposing leave entitlements for both heterosexual and same-sex couples with new babies.

The model suggested by the Commission would help workers balance the competing demands of work and family life; promote lifelong workforce attachment for women and redress, to some extent, the barriers they face at work. Normalising employees caring responsibilities, has been, and will continue to be an important process in changing the culture of work to better respond to the needs of an increasingly diverse workforce.

The proposed model is not a perfect system. In particular, EMILY's List would like to see employer top-ups over the tax-payer funded minimum wage rate incorporated into the paid parental leave scheme.

EMILY's List made a supplementary submission to the Commission in response to the draft report calling for the recommendations to be implemented. We hope to see the Rudd Government implement a publicly funded system which facilitates, supports and values women's contributions in the workplace and to the workforce as soon as possible.

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## Review of the *Sex Discrimination Act*

2008 saw the first review of the effectiveness of the Sex Discrimination Act in its history by the Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs. While EMILY's List welcomed this long overdue inquiry into the effectiveness of the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act, we urge the Committee to consider a more wide-ranging and dynamic consultation on this issue.

The short time frame limited the breadth of the inquiry and impacted on the length, depth and number of submissions received. Given this is the first review of this legislation in almost 15 years, there is a substantial scope for review and consultations around the true effectiveness of and potential improvements to the *Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984*.

As other organisations have made substantive submissions, the goal of EMILY's Lists submission was defined as flagging three

areas that we believe to be of particular concern. Our focus was on:

1. We believe there must be impetus for employers and other organisations to proactively address all forms of discrimination in their workplaces and in their service delivery.
2. Sexual harassment remains an area in which more work is needed to address gender equity.
3. Finally, we believe that discrimination on the basis of sex remains prevalent in our society and affects all areas of women's lives, and in many instances gender discrimination is subtle. As such, any reforms must seek to redress systemic and indirect instances of discrimination as well as more direct examples.

The Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs released its report on 12 December and we look forward to examining the detail early in the new year.

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